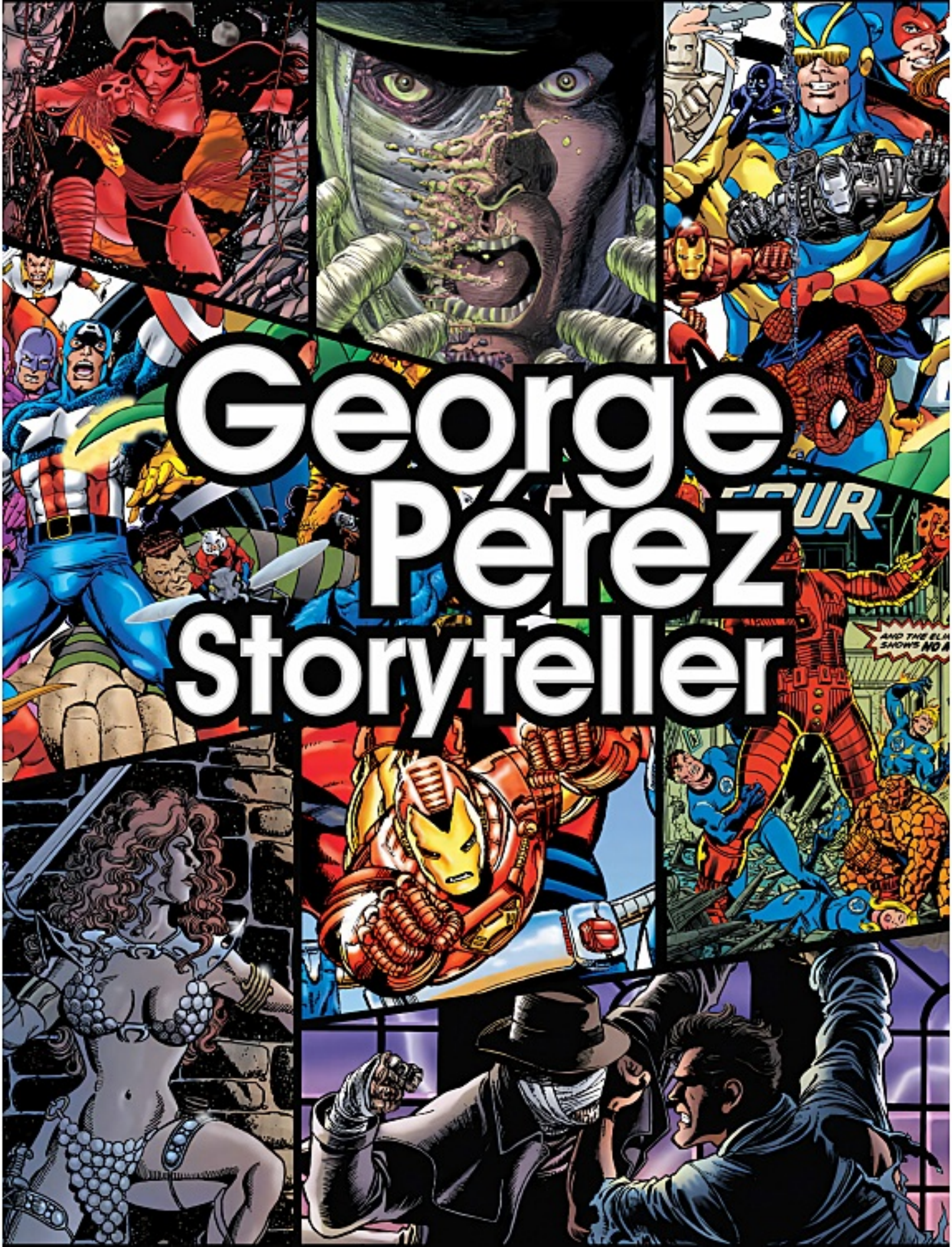
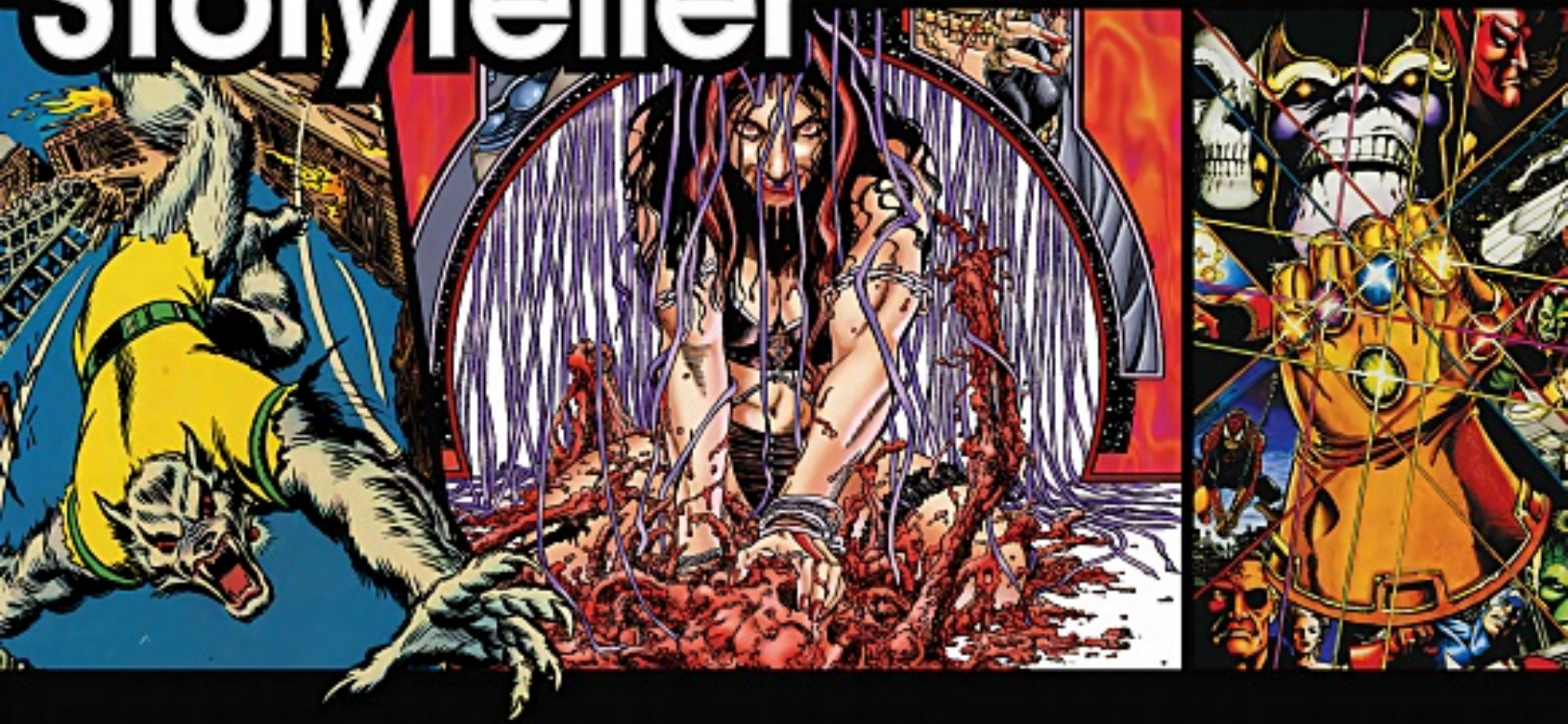

George Pérez
Storyteller

George Pérez Storyteller

His art is unforgettable.
His ability is undeniable.
Pérez is a master of his craft.
A living legend.
A storyteller.



His resumé - more than 10 Comics Buyer's Guide Fan Awards, a three-time Kirby Award winner, the 2000 CBLDF Defender of Liberty, eight Squiddies, three Wizard Fan Awards -

For more than three decades, George Pérez has infused the comic book medium with power, passion and creativity; lending his dynamic talents to some of the most monumental projects in the industry's history.

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STORYTELLER

Three Decades of George Pérez

Written by Christopher Lawrence

"To the two women who've shaped my life, past, present and future: my beautiful wife, Carol Flynn, and my equally beautiful mother, Luz Maria Izquierdo Pérez.

I couldn't have done it without them. And to all my friends, family, fans and associates throughout the decades: my humblest and sincerest thanks for a life's story worth the telling."

—George Pérez

For Amy, who was promised she'd always go first,
and Mr. Clavelli, who's waited long enough.

—Christopher Lawrence

George Pérez: Storyteller

Dedicated to George Pérez, whose contributions to the art form have enriched the lives of generations.

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Acknowledgments:

Dynamic Forces would like to thank the following people:
Bob Stein, Kurt Busiek, Tom Smith, Michael Lovitz, Andy Mangels.

Chris Lawrence would like to thank the following people for their assistance in making *Storyteller* possible:
Tom Brevoort, Kurt Busiek, Steve Englehart, Barbara Kesel, Joe Quesada, John Stangeland, Roy Thomas, Len Wein, Marv Wolfman and, of course, George Pérez.

Matty Ryan would like to thank the following people:
Chris, George, Nick, Tom Palmer, Tom Smith, Bobby Nash, my family, and my wife for putting up with the long hours.

Published in the United Sates by Dynamic Forces, Inc. 155 Ninth Avenue, Suite B, Runnemede, NJ 08078. Dynamic Forces logo TM 2006 Dynamic Forces, Inc.

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A catalog record is available from the Library of Congress

ISBN: 1-933305-15-0 (hardcover) ISBN: 1-933305-14-2 (softcover)

To find a comics shop in your area, call the Comic Shop Locator Service toll-free at 1-888-266-4226.

The text of this book is set in Times.

First American Edition, 2006

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in Canada

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FOUR INTRODUCTIONS
An Overture to The George Pérez Retrospective

Introductions, introductions.

My first introduction to George Pérez: I can't be sure, due to age and the vagaries of memory, what comic book I first saw George's work in, but I think it was *Avengers* #141. Could have been *Fantastic Four* #164 or *Inhumans* #1, possibly, but I didn't see his earlier work until years later. But even if I saw his work somewhere else first, I know I was jazzed to see what I thought of as "the new guy" in that issue of *Avengers*—I have a hazy memory of a news item in *The Comic Reader* talking up his arrival, and since Marvel seemed excited, since I was a big Avengers fan and since the story continued that whole Hugh-Jones/Roxxon plot thread from *Captain America* (yeah, that's me, a continuity maven even then), I was all itchy to get that issue and see what the fuss was about.

I remember cracking open the issue, flipping through the first few pages and thinking, "*This* is the new guy? I don't like this."

Of such beginnings are greatness made, huh?

It turned out that mostly, what I didn't like was the Vinnie Colletta inkwork. Or maybe it was the opening scene—a battle with a bunch of no-name thugs in plain green battlesuits, in a cavernously-empty Manhattan that was supposed to be a night scene but was colored as day. I do know that once the scene changed to a hospital scene involving Yellowjacket and the Wasp, and later a battle with the Squadron Supreme, I was much more taken with the artwork. And the next issue, the Pérez/Vinnie combo looked better, and later, Sam Grainger's inks proved far more appropriate. And meanwhile, over in Fantastic Four, Joe Sinnott was inking this Pérez guy, and it looked damn good, and …

…well, maybe this Pérez guy was pretty good after all.

The thing I liked was, George's storytelling had snap. It had energy, it had emotion. I liked all the little panels, and I may not have realized, back then, that it gave George more "moments," more chances for a character to react, to cop an attitude, to throw the perfect punch, whatever—but I responded to it. Plus, George's pages had more rubble to them than anyone this side of Jack Kirby. When things broke in a Pérez comic, they *broke*. And that made the heroes seem more powerful, the villains more dangerous…man, I *liked* this Pérez guy.

And that second impression bore out as George turned out to be one of the all-time great Avengers artists, turned in stylish and memorable runs of *Fantastic Four* with writers Roy Thomas and Len Wein (and of course FF uber-inker Sinnott), a gorgeous looking *X-Men Annual* and more for Marvel, before wandering over to DC and giving us some great-looking *JLA* comics and then, of course, *The New Teen Titans*. And by then, he was *George Pérez*, superstar artist, on his way to becoming one of the team that changed the face of comics forever with *Crisis on Infinite Earths*.

But for me, as just one reader, it all started with *Avengers* #141.

My second introduction to George Pérez: Here goes my memory again—I can remember all the names of the wacky Greenwich village beatnik hangouts the X-Men used to frequent, but when it comes to real-world events, it's a crapshoot—but I don't remember when I first met George. I'm sure it was at a convention, and it was probably one of those, "Hi, love your work, sir" moments that lasted for two seconds.

But ah, the impression George makes! I may not know when it started, but boy, once you've met George, you don't forget it. George is larger-than-life—and I mean that almost literally. George gives the impression of being a physically larger person than he really is. Part of it is those loud Hawaiian shirts, most (all?) handmade by George's wife, Carol, but the man inside is equal to the shirts and then some. George is gregarious, friendly, with a booming laugh and a great way with an anecdote—he seems to belong at the center of attention, like a cheerful Puerto Rican Odin with the godly power to be among a group of instant friends wherever he goes.

And George works *hard* at conventions—harder than most artists work at home, I think. He does as many sketches for fans as possible, usually knocking himself out to earn money for ACTOR, the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund or, at Heroes Con, for the Charlotte Firefighters Burned Children's Fund, a charity George has been supporting for years. It's hard not to pitch in, too, when you're near George—his energy is infectious, and if I'm sitting by him while he's fundraising, I'll wind up drawing my own (lousy) sketches, selling word balloons of fans' favorite characters (that, I can do creditably) for charity, or whatever.

That's George. He makes life more fun for people around him and better for people he's never met. He's a great guy.

My *third* introduction to George Pérez: I'd read his work for years, I'd met him at cons, but it's a whole new thing the first time you get to work with George. For me, that happened on the first *Thunderbolts* annual. Things were already set for George to come back and relaunch Avengers with me writing it, but we were doing a multi-artist jam story for the T-Bolts origin, and George was tapped to draw a chapter as a kind of preview of the collaboration to come.

George drew a three-page sequence in which Baron Zemo pulled Atlas out of the Kosmos dimension, so he could join the 'Bolts. Three pages, that's all.

But all that stuff I said before about energy, emotion and powerful storytelling? Double it. Triple it.

In the space of three pages, George drew a spectacularly complex lab, a howling storm of energy and alien rage, a Zemo who not only stood unbowed in the face of power, he faced that power down and conquered it. And more. He delivered an exotic setting, physical and emotional threats, drama, humor and pitch-perfect characterization, in a scene that I'd originally been disappointed he was going to draw because there wasn't that much to it. Oh, and on one page that I think was three panels long when plotted, he delivered eleven panels, without losing an iota of impact.

That's what working with George is like. You always get back more than you ask for. Every page is full-tilt George Pérez, full of passion and power. It was like that all through Avengers, like that all through *JLA/Avengers* (and then some!), and I'm sure the next time George and I work together, it'll be like that again.

Plus, of course, there's the standard Pérez answer to any question beginning "Which characters should we use in …"? The answer is, inevitably: "All of them." George fears nothing. It's what makes him so good at big-cast event stories, why there's always such a long line of writers lined up for the chance to work with him. You simply can't throw anything at George that he won't take a swing at. And more than likely, he'll hit it out of the park.

In my title to this piece, I said four introductions. The fourth introduction is yours. I'm willing to bet that if you're buying this book, you already know George's work—how many people buy retrospective volumes on people they've never heard of? I'll bet all of you (or almost all) know George's work from the comics. Many of you have met George at conventions. And some of you reading this—hi Marv, hi Len, hi Tom—have had the privilege of working with George on some of the stuff that appears in this book.

And as I've told the stories of my introductions to George, over the years, I'm betting you'll have been thinking back on the first Pérez comic you ever read, or the first time you got a sketch or an autograph from George at a con. Or the first time, as editor or writer, you opened an envelope, pulled out pages George drew and went "Holy @#$%! *Look* at this stuff!" [And if you're an inker, you added, "I have to ink all this by *when*?!"]

And odds are, thinking back, you're smiling, remembering those moments, those comics, those pages, thinking back to the thrills and pleasure that George Pérez has given you all these years.

And that's perfect, because you're about to relive a lot more of them. Turn the page. Let the show begin….

—Kurt Busiek
September 2006

I

PASSION PLAY

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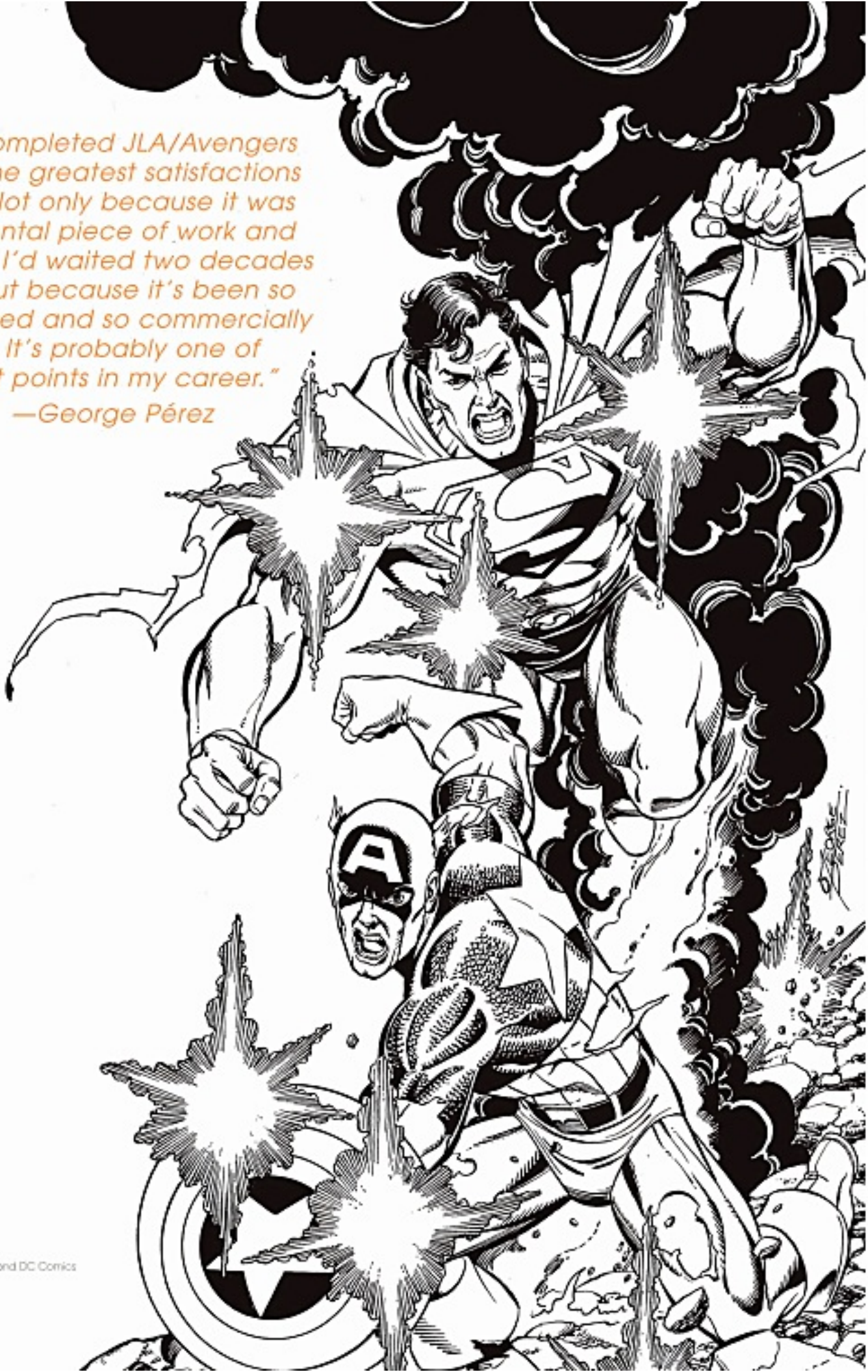
"Having completed JLA/Avengers is one of the greatest satisfactions I've had. Not only because it was a monumental piece of work and something I'd waited two decades to finish, but because it's been so well received and so commercially successful. It's probably one of the highest points in my career."

—George Pérez



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George Pérez smiles.

It's what he does.

He smiles when he tells stories, when he pencils and inks, details and designs. His smile is there when he greets guests at the door and when he meets fans at a convention; it's there when he sketches, when he signs autographs and whenever anyone mentions his wife's name.

George Pérez smiles.

It's almost as if he can't help himself.

Mention *The New Teen Titans* and he grins, talk about the cover to the fifth issue of *Crisis On Infinite Earths* and he beams. Say the words "JLA/Avengers" to him and...and you'd swear his smile shines a little bit brighter, that this man—this self-taught artist renowned for his laid-back attitude, his charisma and his charm—somehow becomes even more jovial. His chest swells with a proud papa's pride, his eyes gleam, his cheeks dimple like those of a child on Christmas morning.

And why not? *JLA/Avengers* had shadowed the penciler throughout most of his illustrious 30-year comic career, been a project that—until a glorious day in 2004—represented his unfinished masterpiece, his Requiem, his "Edwin Drood."

On the day in question—March 31, 2004—the concluding issue of *JLA/Avengers* finally hit stores, some 21 years after the execs at Marvel and DC first pitched him on the cross-company crossover; and with its arrival, the greatest artistic odyssey of one of comics' greatest artists came to a fulfilling end. Now that the project's completed, now that the *JLA/Avengers* scripts have been transferred, once and for all, from the "to do" to the "done" pile, George Pérez...well, he smiles.

"Having completed *JLA/Avengers* is one of the greatest satisfactions I've had," the artist says. "Not only because it was a monumental piece of work and something I'd waited two decades to finish, but because it's been so well received and so commercially successful.

"It's probably one of the highest points in my career."

His is a career that could be measured in many ways: in terms of its concrete achievements (sales figures, industry awards and fan plaudits), its impact (the changes Pérez has effected on the superhero comic medium) or simply in terms of time—in a world where major corporations rise and fall like drunks on Bourbon Street, holding down the same job for 30 years is quite the accomplishment.

No matter the criteria, there's one denominator common to each of the varied valuations, a characteristic too frequently excluded from discussions of work—passion.

Pérez possesses a passion for comic books that's almost boundless. It drives the professionalism that drives his sales figures; it engenders the focus that enabled him to alter the face of the industry; it powers the perseverance that made JLA/Avengers such a satisfying reality.

His passion is the emotive impetus for, and the driving force behind, everything he does. And unlike most, the storyteller doesn't spend his life in service of his passion, he employs his passion in the service of his life.

Society views comics—entertainment of any type, for that matter—as an escapist vehicle, a way of achieving temporary separation from the humdrum of the everyday. Pérez, through hard work, tenacity and more than a bit of Heaven-sent talent, rode *his* favorite escapist vehicle to what he calls "a pretty good life."

"The idea that I would have a wonderful house," the artist offers, "that I'd have traveled as much as my wife and I have at the expense of people from other countries who've flown me somewhere to do a convention appearance—it's mind-boggling.

"It's the kind of thing I never would have imagined growing up."

George Pérez, 1975

Though his first professional comic work appeared in print in 1974, Pérez's aspirations to an artistic career in the industry began some five years earlier; his love of the medium, almost a full ten years before that. He was but four or five years old, a child living in the projects in New York's South Bronx, when he picked up his first comic book.

Like so many children of that era, his initial exposure to comics came courtesy the wire racks at the local pharmacy, a spinning tower of four-color wonder whose pull many found difficult to resist.

Pérez found resistance impossible.

At the time, he spoke only Spanish, so the words printed on the pages meant nothing to him, but by

The Dark Knight represents Pérez's introduction to the world of sequential art: "The very first character I ever read in a comic book was Batman..."

© DC Comics

associating the artwork with the text—or, as he puts it, the "strange little squiggles in the word balloons"—he gained not only the ability to read, but the desire to do so.

"My parents totally encouraged it [my fascination with comics], and it gave me a bit of a head start," Pérez recounts. "I wanted to read because of comics, and when I started going to school, it made learning English easier for me because in order to read the comics, I had to read English."

The artist remembers:

"The very first character I ever read in a comic book was Batman, one of those dorky little Batman-alien stories that were popular back in the late 50s, early 60s. That was the start of it all.

"I remember picking up one of the *Brave and the Bold* issues that had the Justice League, and I remember my first issue of *Fantastic Four* was the one that introduced the character of Diablo. As Roy Thomas points out, that was one of the worst selling issues during that time. Curiously, it ended up being the very first issue of the *Fantastic Four* I picked up, and from that point on, as long as I could afford the comic, I got it.

"The first series I remember following religiously was the Legion of Super-Heroes. The irony has not escaped me that, of all the superhero books I have done in my career, the Legion of Super-Heroes is the only major super-team I've never actually drawn stories for. I've drawn covers, and they've appeared in other books I've done, but I've never actually done a Legion story, and that was the beginning and end-all of comics when I was a child."

His favorites also included the quirky comics of the day; he loved the Metal Men and Metamorpho, all the "strange characters" coming out during the 1960s.

"The mid-60s was such a treasure trove of new concepts. I had already been in love with the *Fantastic Four* and *Spider-Man* and *Thor* and almost the entire Marvel line, which at the time was small enough that you could buy everything. I even bought *Sgt. Fury*. I wanted it all. In the mid-60s, when they realized comics were appealing to the college crowd, the creativity level just sparked.

"A lot of those characters are near and dear to my heart. The Teen Titans were 1960s characters, of course, and I would end up having quite the landmark in my career with them."

Both George and his younger brother David demonstrated artistic ability early in life, drawing on just about anything they could get their hands on. Though George's initial urges drew him to detail the accessories in the family bathroom ("My first drawing was on a hamper," he said), the canvas of choice for both

© DC Comics

Brave and the Bold #58
Cover by Ramona Fradon

The "strange characters" of the 1960s — the Metal Men, Metamorpho and the like—stoked the fires of Pérez's comic fandom. "The mid-60s was such a treasure trove of new concepts," he said. "The creativity level just sparked. A lot of those characters are near and dear to my heart."

Pérez brothers was paper—the coarse, brown paper of grocery bags.

"We were a poor family, and we used the brown paper bags as trash bags in our home," George explains, "but the extra ones…my brother and I just tore them open, and we drew on them."

Those pulpy sacks became the blueprints for a new universe, one in which the laws of reality extended as far as the imaginations of two small boys. The Pérez siblings created their own cast of superheroes, ranging from David's Hercules/Samson amalgam "HS" to George's The Bat and Rubber Band Man (star of the bathroom hamper). They drew everything from Popeye ("We were babysat by the television set, so cartoons were everywhere") to Hercules.

"We were big fans of the old Steve Reeves [Hercules] movies at the time, so we were drawing muscular characters," George says. "My brother always drew what I thought, at the time, were more muscular characters, but he just kept adding bigger chunks onto the body. His anatomy was about as bad as mine."

Anatomical exaggerations aside, the pair worked on their comic creations for years, indiscriminately swapping paper and pencils ("We'd use whatever we had," George notes) until their teenage years, at which point David lost interest in drawing. The younger Pérez traded his creative tools for the bats, balls and bases of various athletic endeavors, channeling the energies that once fueled the action-packed exploits of HS into the physical pursuits of youth.

George's focus, however, remained on his art, and the future superstar actively sought ways to feed his creative habit. "I remember when I got my first art pad at Woolworth's," he said. "I was working, earning a couple of bucks helping out in a church, and I spent my own money to get it.

"I spent my own money to buy Flair pens, spent my own money to buy an inkwell. Again, it was at Woolworth's. It [the inkwell] came with a little pen. It had no flexibility, there were no nuances you could achieve with it, but still...it was the idea I was getting closer to doing real comics."

The strides Pérez made in his mind, though, greatly exceeded those he achieved in reality. Looking back, Pérez admits he had "no understanding" of anything involving professional production techniques—he used crayons, markers, "whatever I could" to make his artwork appear similar to a commercially distributed comic.

Keep in mind that, at the time, the process of producing a funnybook was still something of a mystery; the responsibilities (and, to some degree, the very existence) of inkers, editors and color separators were alien to the average reader. Few fans, if any, had more than a passing familiarity with the toil taking place behind the comic book curtain. George, like so many others, remained ignorant of the fact a *professional* letterer filled the text balloons in each issue of the *Legion of Super-heroes* and never suspected that the blue, gray and yellow tones of Batman's costume never actually touched Neal Adams' original artwork.

"I knew I wanted to draw, but the idea of actually becoming a comic artist professionally didn't happen…until that first convention. From that point on, what was a whim became a vocation. Nothing was going to stop me from being a comic book artist."

With that youthful ignorance came an encouraging brand of bliss.

"The mere luxury of having drawing paper was a big thing to me," Pérez says, grinning. "Now, the idea that all the art paper I use to draw a comic is provided free by a company—I still think it's rather cool."

As George grew, so did his infatuation with art, and by the time he entered high school—a point at which most people desperately and deliberately shed their childhood hang-ups—his infatuation had evolved into a full-blown obsession.

But where Cardinal Hayes Memorial High School should have, by all accounts, stifled the young penciler's creativity—the school abolished its art program the year Pérez arrived—it actually fueled the fire of his professional passion, a fire fanned by a student named Tom Sciacca.

Tom, an aspiring artist himself, was "the first other comic fan" George ever met, and, perhaps more monumentally, he was the fan who introduced Pérez—then a high school freshman—to the weird and wonderful world of the sci-fi/comic book convention.

"Up until that time, I knew I wanted to draw," Pérez says, "but the idea of actually becoming a comic artist professionally didn't happen until I met Tom...until that first convention.

"From that point on, what was a whim became a vocation. This is what I wanted. Nothing was going to stop me from being a comic book artist."

His decision made, George immersed himself in the craft, writing, penciling and inking his own comic, *The Battalion* (torn in half by Cardinal Hayes' Dean of Discipline), and utilizing New York's burgeoning convention circuit to introduce himself to professionals and elicit their feedback on his work.

Pérez's first published comic work appeared in 1972, in the second issue of a fanzine called Factors Unknown.

"It was a daunting, shell-shocking experience," he remembers. "When you see what a professional, one who has nothing to gain, thinks of your work; a young kid who's never had an art lesson and is used to nothing but parents and friends saying, 'Yeah, you're really great'...you find out exactly how little you know."

Though he'd earned a small measure of celebrity in school—his artwork had graced the pages of the school paper, the yearbook and the program covers for some of the school plays—Pérez knew he needed to improve if he wanted to see his name in the credits of a major comic title. He redoubled his efforts and penciled his way into comic fanzines, his first published work appearing in 1972 in the second issue of a publication entitled *Factors Unknown*.

Through his work on the 'zines, Pérez brushed shoulders with another future comic pro, one he says has "outshone all of us as far as his impact on the field"—DC President Paul Levitz.

"The man who printed my very first work was a friend of Paul's in his youth," George says. "It's a small world."

Not long after the publication of *Factors Unknown*, Pérez—fresh out of high school—attempted to earn a spot on the big league roster, so to speak. At the time, DC was implementing its Junior Bullpen program, hiring young artists to work in the company's offices as apprentices. The idea was to give the newcomers

some time to learn the business first hand, then eventually put them to work.

Pérez showed his samples, heavily influenced by Barry Windsor-Smith's *Conan*, to editors Sol Harrison and Carmine Infantino.

"I was doing very baroque, ornate panel layouts wherein I was sacrificing storytelling," he admits. "Not to mention that, as I look at it from the point of a man 30 years later, my drawing was not all that great at the time. I can imagine my stuff wasn't what they were looking for."

DC, in other words, rejected him.

"It was a more conservative company," the artist responds, "and my doing this stuff where panel arrangements were second to the page looking really, really busy—that was probably one of the reasons I didn't get the job."

Though frustrated, Pérez persisted, continuing to plug away at his dream. Newly married and employed as a bank teller, he had "a lot of stuff going on" in his life, but admits nothing could supplant his desire to work in comics.

"I really, *really* wanted to be a comic book artist," he explained. "Much to the detriment of my marriage."

He recalls the depths of his fascination with the medium: "When I was a bank teller, I worked at Rockefeller Plaza, right across the street from DC, and one of DC's employees—a man named Alan Asherman—had an account with us. Alan worked behind the scenes; he'd written some articles and the like, but he'd never been one of the big writers, and he wasn't an artist. But when I saw his name on his bank book, I asked, 'Are you THE Alan Asherman?' It totally knocked him for a loop, of course, but anyone involved with comics meant something to me. If I saw a name in print anywhere, I thought, 'Wow. At least they're in there.'"

Pérez continued his assault on the industry, but to no avail: "Thanks, but no thanks" and "Don't call us, we'll call you" became all-too familiar farewells. Refusing to admit defeat, he made the most of his rejections, choosing instead to focus on the opportunities they afforded him—namely, the chance to share his portfolio with some of comics' best and brightest. The artists and editors might not offer him work, he thought, but they might just provide him with the tip, trick or piece of advice he needed to land a position with a major publisher.

Superstar artist Neal Adams—the same Neal Adams who served as the inspiration for the young Pérez's artistic style ("Neal was a god to me when I started in comics")—obliged the aspiring penciler's request for counsel, candidly delivering the kind of "really, really harsh" critique that would make American Idol's Simon Cowell proud: "He told me not to hate myself, then pretty much told me everything I was doing was wrong.

"'You can't fake everything,' he said. It was obvious to him I was drawing cars without having references for cars, that I was drawing anatomy without really paying attention to what anatomy is. If I was going to fake it, it would have to be consistent from panel to panel. 'You can't recreate the human body in different ways just to suit the angle you're drawing,' he said. 'Then you're making it up, covering up your weaknesses.'"

Adams also recommended Pérez redo his portfolio to make it more professional—the newcomer had been coloring and inking all his

Cyclops, drawn at age 13

© Marvel Characters, Inc.

originals. "That's not the way we print comic books," Adams said. "If you want to show your pencils, show your pencils. Don't ink your own work—you're not good enough. It's easier to correct with an eraser than it is with White-Out."

Pérez remembers that the Continuity Studios co-founder *did* compliment his page layout ("I think Neal said it was interesting'"), but that was little consolation. Adams knew the business—he and Dick Giordano were running Continuity at the time—and he'd basically told the youngster he had a long way to go.

"Neal made his business by hiring or firing people based on what they were able to do, and I wasn't able to cut the mustard with him," Pérez says. "He even told me, 'You might be able to get work at DC, but you're not good enough for Marvel.'"

Though stunned by the unabashed and uncompromising honesty of the criticisms, some of which he admits he took too personally, Pérez acknowledges that—as he had with the advice of all the other artists with whom he'd spoken—he assimilated a good portion of Adams' directions into his working day.

"Some of the criticism was so harsh it took me a day to pat out the fire, but I always came back to the fact that drawing comic books is what I really want to do," says Pérez, who points out Adams was "the first one to congratulate me" on the success that would one day follow. "Nothing ever discouraged me. The fact I took the criticism, worked hard and improved myself—it taught me I had what it took to be a pro."

All he needed was a way in....

Conjure, circa 1974

II

A MARVEL-OUS DEBUT

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Raw. Fake. Inconsistent. Such words described, characterized—typified—the talent of the teenage George Pérez. His artistic genius, unquestioned three decades later, was muddled by inaccurate anatomy and nearly non-existent perspective. The possibility he'd ever become a professional comic book artist…frankly, his chances didn't look too good. He was fighting an uphill battle. He faced nigh-insurmountable odds. He was, for all intents and purposes, a wannabe.

Fortunately, the greatest talent of George Pérez, the mark of his innate genius, had emerged years earlier, manifesting itself in adolescence like the special powers of the mutant heroes he would one day render.

The true genius of George Pérez lay in his indefatigable determination. His passion. His persistence.

In 1973, he was 19 years old. He was married. He had a job. The foundation for his life had been set. Given a few years, he might have been able to transcend his position as a bank teller; maybe, with a little hard work and a lot of late nights, he could have become an assistant branch manager.

"There are so many incredible artists out there who can draw rings around me, but understanding how to emphasize what needs to be emphasized, how much space to allow for a certain scene; when a page requires smaller panels, when a page needs a big money-shot—that's an instinct for me."

But that's not what George wanted. That wasn't his dream.

"Nothing was going to stop me from being a comic book artist," he'd told himself. "Drawing comic books is what I really want to do."

The dream consumed him. He spent hours slaving over pages, tirelessly plying his pencils in an effort to create the chance that had, thus far, eluded him. He needed to keep trying. He needed to get better. He needed a bit of luck.

Luck, it's been said, happens when you least expect it, and—as if on cue—Pérez unexpectedly "lucked out." The comic hopeful's big break came in the form of a phone call from Rich Buckler, an artist who was starting to make a name for himself at Marvel working on the *Fantastic Four* and *Thor*.

"Rich called one day when I was working at the bank and asked if I would be willing to take an assistant's job," Pérez recalls. "There was no big money to be had; he was just looking for someone who would help him out. I didn't know what that meant at the time, but—yes. Of course I was going to accept."

Serving as Buckler's assistant, at least early on, entailed pulling *Thor* and *FF* reference materials, mostly from issues drawn by Jack Kirby. Still, Pérez learned a few tricks pertaining to perspective and dynamic layouts and, as Buckler's aide, had the occasion to visit the Marvel offices, something the young talent considered invaluable.

In the annals of Pérez history, Buckler also has the distinction of assigning George his first printed professional work: a two-page humor strip at the end of *Astonishing Tales* #25. The strip featured Buckler and writer Doug Moench deep-sixing designs from the drawing board, with the last panel showing Deathlok the Demolisher emerging from the discard pile.

"Rich drew the Deathlok figure," Pérez admits. "I wasn't good enough to draw it. It was his character, his baby, brand-new—I was definitely not someone he'd want to trust with that."

The youngster bided his time, content to keep his face familiar to the powers-that-be at Marvel. The gambit paid off. When Buckler fell behind on a story, "Gulliver of Mars," for *Monsters Unleashed* #8, he had his assistant complete the assignment.

"I did a terrible job," Pérez laments. "Truly horrible."

After "Gulliver," things took a turn for the worse. Buckler and Pérez had a falling out, leading Pérez to walk out on the job for which he'd striven so hard. A subsequent mistake at the bank cost him his position as a teller, and, for the first time in his 20 years, George was adrift, devoid of options, uncertain what to do next.

One week later, the phone rang. It was Buckler. Marvel needed a fill-in on a Man-Wolf story for *Creatures on the Loose*, and the editor wanted to know whether Pérez would be willing to provide the pencils.

And so it began. After seven days of unemployment, George Pérez landed a job as a comic book penciler,a position that—30 years later—he still hasn't relinquished.

"Man-Wolf" was, by no stretch of the imagination, a successful comic series, and—perhaps by extension—it was a series few professionals wanted to draw. To Pérez, though, it was a comic, a full-color comic put out by one of the industry's "Big Two," no less.

Pérez's name, of course, was still unknown; he was far removed from his dream of one day having the industry's A-list talents conceptualizing projects with him in mind, so it's understandable that "Man-Wolf" writer David Anthony Kraft hesitated at the news a rookie would be replacing veteran artist George Tuska. The scribe, relatively new to the industry himself, quickly changed his tune, though, and ultimately championed Pérez as the series' permanent artist.

Pérez simultaneously took on another job for Marvel, the black-and-white "Sons of the Tiger" strip in *Deadly Hands of Kung Fu* magazine. Or, as he recalls, "another job no one wanted." The series, produced in collaboration with writer Bill Mantlo, quickly became

Man-Wolf #34 — *Though not a character with whom Pérez is often associated, Man-Wolf holds a place of prominence in the artist's career: the Marvel hero starred in* Creatures on the Loose, *Pérez's first comic book series.*

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15

"You could learn how to draw, but you couldn't learn how to tell stories well...The drawing will come if the storytelling's there, and George had that."

—Marv Wolfman

another permanent gig for the rookie, a hiring that—for then-editor Marv Wolfman—was not without risk.

"When George first came into the Marvel offices, I didn't think he was very good as an artist," Wolfman recounted, "and as an editor, your job is on the line if you hire the wrong person.

"George...he made all the mistakes beginning artists made back then. He had promise, though, because the storytelling was there. He was already fairly decent as a storyteller, so I was willing to put up with the poor artwork for a while."

Storytelling, even then, was a tremendous source of pride for Pérez; the weapon in his artistic arsenal to which—to this day—he attributes both his early success and his amazing longevity.

"There are so many incredible artists out there who can draw rings around me, but understanding how to emphasize what needs to be emphasized, how much space to allow for a certain scene; when a page requires smaller panels, when a page needs a big money-shot—that's an instinct for me. I couldn't be anything else but a comic book artist. I need to be able to tell a story.

"So many of the artists I grew up with...there were some whose work I loved on a visual level. They were great, great artists, but they weren't the best storytellers. Even I was aware of that to some degree. There was something about it; something about it was beautiful, but it didn't really carry a story. I paid too much attention to looking at the artwork.

"Then there were those whose artwork I didn't really care as much about, but they really told a story. Suddenly, I didn't notice that the artwork was not really my cup of tea, because it didn't distract from the story being told. That person was a natural storyteller.

"And then there were those artists who were great at both. They have an incredibly great grasp, great art, and know how to tell a story."

If an artist is doing the job correctly, Pérez explains, if a good writer's collaborating with a good visual storyteller, readers won't notice one aspect over the other. They'll see the end product as a uniform whole, as a story well told.

"I used to feel a little bit peeved whenever I would see a review on a book I had drawn and somebody was commenting all about the story, no one was really mentioning the art to any degree—they were just going on and on about the story," he says. "Then I realized that's exactly what I'm supposed to do. It's like a director not calling too much attention to himself by being so glitzy that people *notice* he's directing. Storytelling should be dynamic, forceful. If it's well drawn, great, but it should always be at the service of a story."

Pérez feels his ability to be dynamic and forceful, his gift for telling stories, was—at least in the early days—his saving grace, the one aspect of the art of professional comic art that couldn't be taught.

Wolfman agrees with the assessment.

"You could learn how to draw, but you couldn't learn how to tell stories well," the editor offers. "You put up with the [young] artists until they learn to get the drawing out of the way, until they understand what they're doing, because of the storytelling.

"The drawing will come if the storytelling's there, and George had that."

Unfortunately, Pérez's drawing—to use Wolfman's terminology— hadn't yet "come" circa "Man-Wolf" and "Sons of the Tiger." His art was still rough, unsophisticated, even if the penciler didn't see it that way himself.

"I remember him being very sure he was doing everything the right way," Wolfman says. "He wasn't."

But one can never underestimate the value of real world experience. It's been said a professional—any kind of professional—learns more in his first six months on a job than he does in all his years of school, and, in the case of the self-taught Pérez, truer words may never have been spoken.

The members of Marvel's famed Bullpen loomed over him, the world's most intimidating faculty. They were the upperclassmen teaching the new kid at school the rules of the playground. The Marvel staffers gave their student a crash course in comics; artists, inkers and editors deluged him with answers to questions he didn't know enough to ask and told him everything—everything—he was doing wrong, a list Pérez admits was "pretty extensive."

They kept on him, kept at him, and Pérez took it all—to a point. He knew the information being heaped upon him was vital, and he neither wanted to lose his job nor dampen his dream, but since he already had enough of an ego to bristle at being bossed around, he decided to treat his "teachers" to a demonstration of his skills. In an effort to show his critics how inaccurate their assessments were, to illustrate how much he already knew, the youngster vowed to illustrate something his mentors said he couldn't.

It may have been the best thing he could have done. By behaving like…well, like the petulant rookie he was, Pérez learned.

"I said I was proving them wrong, but what I was really doing was proving them right," he laughs. "There *was* room for improvement, and I had to address that."

Wolfman, a graduate of New York's High School of Art and Design and a former art teacher, was—to Pérez's recollection—"rather ruthless" in pointing out the young artist's shortcomings.

"George's artwork at the time was fairly crude," Wolfman affirms. "He had problems with perspective and basic anatomy. He was trying to do shots he just wasn't ready to do yet.

"I gave him hell over his 'Sons of the Tiger' stuff. I didn't think he was up to it completely, and kept challenging a lot of the work."

Despite that—or rather, *because* of that—Pérez credits Wolfman, as he does Neal Adams, with directing his youthful focus.

"Marv addressed certain real flaws in my work," he says. "I didn't draw enough backgrounds to establish where every character was supposed to be at any given time; my anatomy was off to the effect that whenever I moved the body in unusual angles, they suddenly accordioned or something.

"Those suggestions pretty much changed my style—now I do so much with background, perspective and details, and it all goes back to Marv. He's the one who said, 'You really should put a little more sense of place and a sense of atmosphere in your work.'"

Wolfman, however, says he only assisted in the inevitable:

"George would have learned on his own. He's too good, too obstinate, not to have. Being forced to improve because an editor was pushing him, because he had to if he wanted to get paid, got him moving faster than he would have. It may have taken him a year and a half to get as good as he was going to be, instead of the four to five months it did.

"I honestly believe that if I didn't do it, the next editor would have."

As for the extent of his criticism, Wolfman said he wouldn't have been so harsh with Pérez if he didn't think the young artist had what it took to succeed.

"He certainly had everything necessary to make it. I'm a little bit more challenging to people simply

The Inhumans

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because I went to the High School of Art and Design and that's the way they dealt with us. If you were dealing with fans, fine. You talk with them, you mollify them. Play, have fun.

"But if you're talking on a professional level, where you have to pay somebody, you make them get to work. You don't mollycoddle someone in that position. It's not a fanzine. It's a professional magazine, and the person has to get good fast.

"By the third Sons of the Tiger strip, George had proved he had everything he needed. From that point on, he was just going to keep getting better." —*Marv Wolfman*

"Ninety percent of those people never do. George not only did, he exceeded everybody else. He was not only willing to prove me wrong, which—as he says—proved me right; he did so by improving himself to the point he became better than anyone else."

Pérez's proof appeared on his editor's desk as a splash page, one featuring the White Tiger, a Puerto Rican superhero he co-created with Mantlo for the "Sons of the Tiger." The page shows the hero bounding symbolically above New York City with some of the buildings looming up to spell out the character's name.

"It was very Will Eisner-ish," Pérez says, "though, ironically, I did not know who Will Eisner was at the time.

"That page was done specifically to address the flaws that Marv saw in my work. It was the beginning of the busy, dense drawing style that would become the earmark of my career."

It was also the moment Pérez outgrew his rookie tag. By the time he penciled the issue in question—only his third arc of "Sons of the Tiger"—his work had improved exponentially, reaching the point the only question Wolfman still had about the artist was, "How long can I possibly keep him?"

"By the third 'Sons of the Tiger' strip, he had proved he had everything he needed," the editor says. "From that point on, he was just going to keep getting better."

Marvel wasted no time shining the spotlight upon the creator; within a year of his emergence on "Man-Wolf" and "Sons," he cracked into the big time, earning a shot at *Fantastic Four*—again, because of Rich Buckler.

Buckler, the *Fantastic Four*'s regular artist, wasn't going to be able to pencil the series' annual, and, since Pérez had served as his assistant, the editors handed him the assignment.

Just like that, he realized the goal that had been driving him for the last decade; he'd done what Neal Adams once suggested he couldn't do—he found work on a classic Marvel comic.

Unfortunately, Pérez—despite his abiding love of the medium—didn't know all that much about the current approach to the *Fantastic Four*. Fearlessly, foolishly or both, he took it upon himself to, as he explains it, "do my own spin" on the heroes.

"I drew Johnny Storm very uncharacteristically," the artist chuckles. "He was dressed like a pimp I would know from the South Bronx."

The move didn't quite jibe with Marvel's image of Johnny as a blond, blue-eyed All-American boy, but writer Roy Thomas humored Pérez and wrote the outfit into the script, most likely because he didn't want the entire sequence redrawn.

"Roy pointed out I made the Thing too short and I made him walk in a way that didn't make him look very Thing-like," the artist remembers. "And Reed Richards; unlike a lot of elastic characters at the time, he was not a character who just stretched at the neck. He stretched at the waist. You didn't see his neck elongate. It was an undignified thing that Reed would not do. I learned that, too."

The lessons proved important for Pérez, who realized penciling involved more than simply drawing; it entailed keeping characters in character.

Because of that story, which actually ended up being broken up over two issues (#164 & #165) of the regular series, Pérez received a call from Stan Lee's secretary.

"He had seen my first issue of *Fantastic Four* and had assumed it was either John Buscema or John Romita who'd penciled it," George says. "When Stan saw a name he had never heard before, he called me into his office."

Pérez got his very first raise that day, as well as the official blessing of Marvel's main man, he whose name graced the masthead of every comic in the company's line.

"Stan was proud," Pérez remembers proudly, "to have discovered…to have recognized…a new talent."

Getting kudos from the co-creator of the Marvel Universe, a man already legendary in the industry, filled Pérez with an unbelievable sense of accomplishment. It elated him. Stan Lee, after all, *had* just called him into his office to praise him. Mr. Marvel just applauded *his* talent. George thought things couldn't possibly get any better.

Yet they did.

For starters, Marvel offered him *Fantastic Four* on a monthly basis. He accepted, of course—there was simply no way Pérez, a kid from the New York ghettos, a lifelong lover of comics, would turn down a regular gig on the World's Greatest Comics Magazine.

He assumed responsibilities for the series with issue #166, and writer Thomas says his new partner's artistic abilities developed "quickly and nicely."

"Even though his versions of the characters weren't as strong yet as Rich's and others', I liked his storytelling," the

scribe said. "We had fun putting the two of us, Stan Lee, and Jack Kirby into one Impossible Man story, doing parodies of the Legion of Substitute Heroes and a lot of other stuff.

"I knew I'd always get thought-out work."

Initially, Pérez's thoughts about the series dealt less with the work itself and more with the approach he'd take to it. In FF, he inherited a book with an artistic style far removed from his own; Buckler's lines had been so evocative of Jack Kirby that some people within the Bullpen joked Marvel should have returned Buckler's original art to Kirby.

Though he admired Kirby's style, it was a look the young Pérez, still closely associated with Buckler in the minds of some Marvel staffers, deliberately tried to avoid.

WHAT DO YOU THINK, PLASTER-OF-PARIS PUSS?
I'VE GOT ME A DATE-- IF IT'S OKAY WITH YOU, THAT IS.
NEW THREADS WHITER TEETH-- AND FRESH BREATH--
TALK ABOUT YOUR WINNING COMBOS!
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"I drew Johnny Storm very uncharacteristically," Pérez chuckles. "He was dressed like a pimp I would know from the South Bronx."

"I was uncomfortable with the idea of swiping him," he says, "but if I wanted to do the *Fantastic Four*, I had to learn to blend in."

Blend may actually be the best word to describe Pérez's method; he took Kirby's epic, larger-than-life techniques and combined them both with Thomas' advice and the personalized artistic touches he, himself, had been developing.

With the aid of incomparable inker Joe Sinnott, George added a sense of freshness to the series, modifying the appearances of the FF to make the characters a little more distinguishable, a little more distinct, slightly more real.

In bestowing upon him a more well-defined physique, Reed Richards became a true leading man, a Doc Savage, he-man of a hero who could be admired by the common folk as much for his bulging biceps as his big brain. Sue simultaneously slimmed down and filled out—Pérez made her facial features more delicate, her cheekbones more prominent, while gifting her the voluptuous curves that would eventually become one of his trademarks.

After shedding Johnny's "ghetto pimp" look and returning him to his traditional All-American style, the artist advanced the character a step and heightened the Torch's heartthrob quotient, giving him the musculature of an All-American athlete. The Thing, meanwhile, became more than just a concrete countenance; under Pérez's pencils, he evolved from a highly detailed collection of rocks into a truly emotive, wonderfully sympathetic figure, the true heart and soul of the team.

Team.

Professionally, *Fantastic Four* represented the birth of that concept for Pérez, who for all intents and purposes took over as the head of the Richards household when he took over the title. He was working with his first real team, dealing with his first group dynamic, creating his first comic book family—a role he seemed destined to play.

"I think my love of team books was there from the very beginning," he says, referencing his early fascination with the Legion of Super-Heroes. "When I look at why I enjoy doing super-team books, one of the things I keep coming back to is the variety. When I get tired with one character, I get to do another.

"Also, I am incredibly fond of interaction between characters. I love it in dramas that I watch, in television or movies; it's my way of keeping my social skills—I work in a very solitary work environment.

Don't mistake "solitary" for "solo," however. Pérez credits his artistic teammate on *Fantastic Four*, Sinnott, for the glowing reception he received on the series, confessing the classic *FF* inker "made me look great."

Twenty-plus years after he'd drawn it, Pérez came upon a piece of original artwork from early in his *Fantastic Four* run and found himself reminiscing. He remembered his (as-yet-unwarranted) ego's response to Sinnott's "wonderful" inks: "Finally," he thought. "An inker who does me justice."

After taking a closer look at the originals, though, after seeing the hint of where his pencil lines were on the faces and where Sinnott made corrections, the penciler realized just how much of an impact his inker had.

"I drew characters that were good," Pérez said, "but Joe made them into the Fantastic Four. He had to do some actual drawing there; he made me look so much better. When I look at my other work [from that era], inked by people who would not do as much for me as Joe

Fantastic Four *was one of the first team books to benefit from Pérez's personalizing touch; the artist made a leading man out of Mr. Fantastic, turned the Invisible Girl into a head-turner, humanized the Thing and brought the Human Torch back to his All-American roots.*

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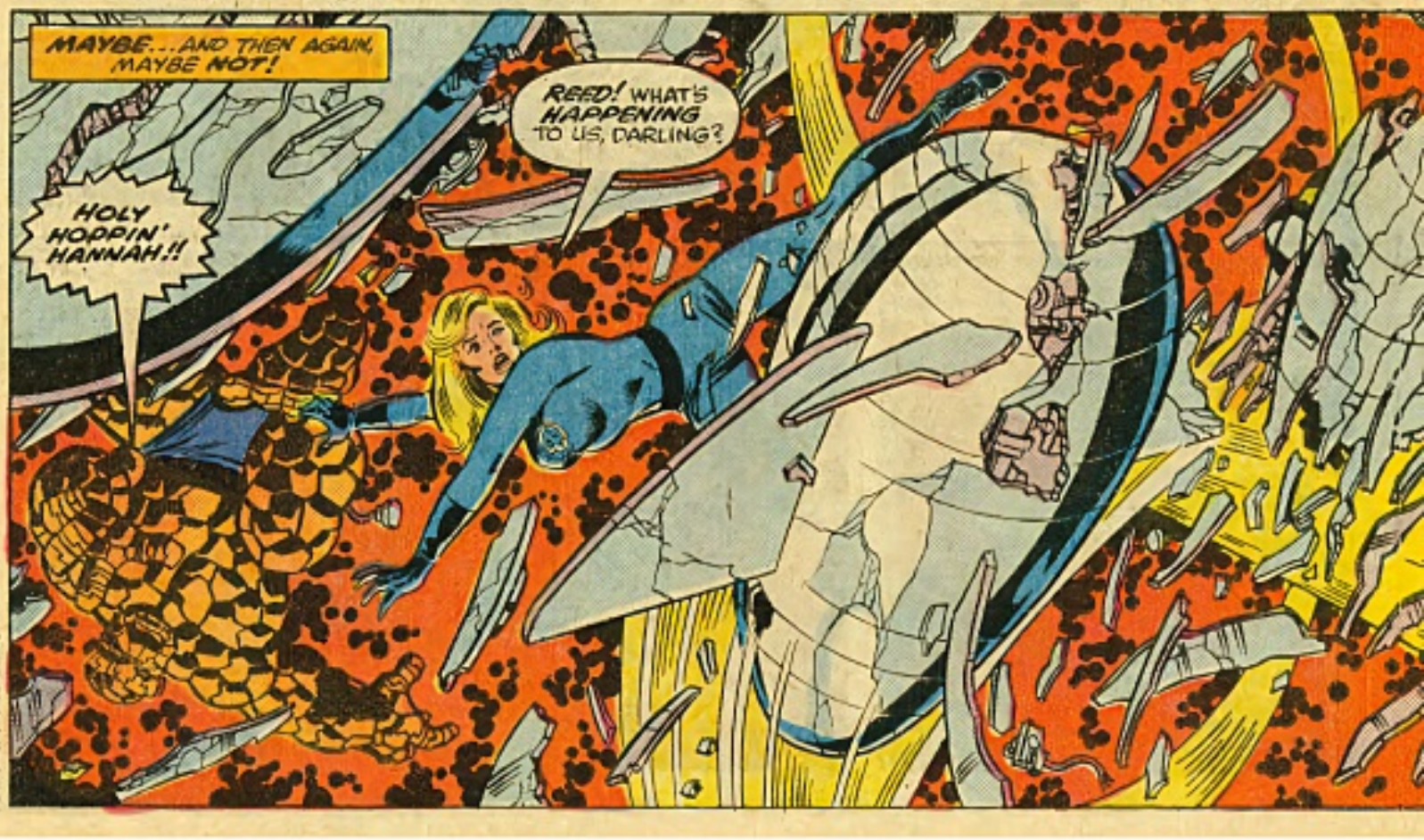

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did, then I saw how really weak some of my stuff was."

His perspective still didn't work. His faces, though distinctive, were crooked. His bodies moved in impossible, or at least very uncomfortable, ways. Pérez noted each and every one of the flaws of his former self, but rather than disparaging the panels of his past—"Oh, how horrible I was"—he found reason to praise them, considering the artwork a barometer of his talent, proof of how much better he's become.

"I've learned from my experiences," he says. "If I was still drawing that way and couldn't see my weaknesses, then I wouldn't have improved at all as an artist. Joe Sinnott improved my work, added a subtlety to it I really didn't see until I got older.

"But even I," he adds, "through an albeit biased but more critical eye, could see that I did have the storytelling."

It's a skill that, throughout the course of the calendar year 1975, would become much more evident. Right after Pérez landed *FF*, Bill Mantlo invited him to draw *Inhumans*, the first debut series (i.e., a series he penciled beginning with issue #1) of his professional career. Normally, such a milestone might have been cause for celebration, but in the case of *Inhumans* #1, there really wasn't the time. The first issue had already been delayed—it was already a full month late, as a matter of fact—so Pérez had to pencil it, in its entirety, in a week.

Things slowed down considerably on subsequent issues—the series only hit the stands every other month— yet while Pérez enjoyed drawing Black Bolt, Medusa and Company immensely, he never felt he and writer Doug Moench meshed on the title.

"Even though I loved the *Inhumans*, I don't think I ever found my language on that book," he says. "It was at a time when the only artists I saw whose Inhumans I enjoyed were Jack Kirby and Neal Adams. They had two totally different takes, and I don't think I was there to match either one of them.

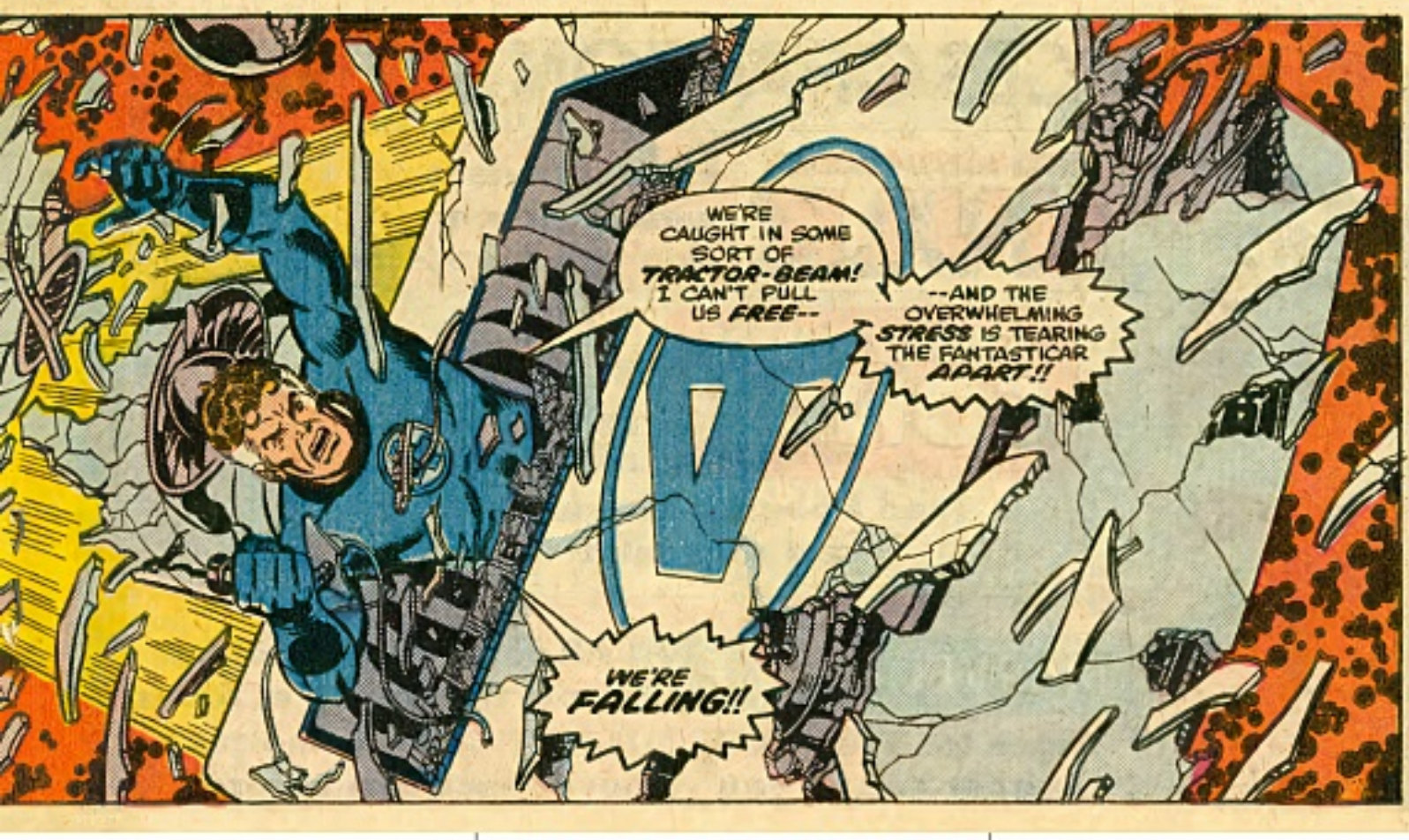
"My storytelling prowess was good enough, everyone seemed to enjoy it at the time, but when Gil Kane took over [after me]...his dynamics were ten times better than mine. He knew how to lay out a page, and he was more comfortable with the human body. I still hadn't gotten quite that far yet."

Far enough, though, for him to move on to a project far bigger than *Inhumans*, a series even more prestigious in the minds of the fans than the *Fantastic Four*—*The Avengers*.

"*The Avengers*," he admits, "was the book I really wanted to do."

As it happened, the climate in comics at the time was ideal for Pérez, still a relative newcomer, to land such a large-scale title. As there were no royalties being paid in those days, very few professionals wanted to associate themselves with team books. They could get the same amount of money for drawing a page featuring Captain America fighting the Red Skull as they could for a page on which the entire Avengers roster slugged it out with a super-villain squad.

Pérez not only liked the idea of doing the bigger battle, he preferred it.


WE'RE CAUGHT IN SOME SORT OF TRACTOR-BEAM! I CAN'T PULL US FREE--
--AND THE OVERWHELMING STRESS IS TEARING THE FANTASTICAR APART!!
WE'RE FALLING!!

"If I had an identity very early on," he says, "it came from my desire, my enthusiasm, my love for team books."

And if there was a team book to do at the time, it was *Avengers*.

"At that point, George was coming on to a fairly major strip," explains then-*Avengers* writer Steve Englehart. "I think he raised the level. I was just doing what I had always been doing—the fact things went up was tied to who was drawing it."

"If I had an identity very early on, it came from my desire, my enthusiasm, my love for team books...I just love the idea of these characters relating to each other and juggling all those balls at the same time."

The first arc, oddly enough, featured the Avengers versus the Squadron Supreme, an alternate-reality super-team based on DC's Justice League of America, a precursor to one—or rather, two—of the biggest projects of Pérez's career.

"Funny how things work out, isn't it?" Englehart laughs.

The writer had become quite accustomed to breaking in artists on *Avengers*; he estimates he'd probably collaborated with half a dozen pencilers by the time Pérez arrived.

"Month to month, I was never clear who was going to draw the book," he says. "Then all of a sudden, there was George. I'd never heard of him, but I was very pleased with what I was seeing.

"That first story started off with the Beast. He captured the Beast; he captured the ambiance of the Avengers; he walked into the strip, and he knew exactly how to do it, which isn't always the case with people.

"George's stories are very pleasant to look at. He's a good storyteller, but he's also fun. It's good art, it's well laid-out art, but there's always a sense of playfulness in what George does. There's always a gleam in the eye of the artwork."

Pérez's enthusiasm translated directly to the page—he paid close attention to every character in the scene. Those who weren't involved directly in the conversation did more than just serve as background wallpaper; they were part of the scene and reacted as normal people would.

"It's like working on a movie. Keeping track of the scenes I've drawn, of the characters I've shone ... what happened to this character, what's this character doing now," the penciler says. "In doing team books, I just love the idea of these characters relating to each other and juggling all those balls at the same time."

The approach, the amount of effort Pérez put into his

SOMETHING TELLS US THERE'S TROUBLE BREWING BEHIND THAT IRON MASK! BUT WE'LL HAVE TO EXPLORE DOOM'S PLANS FOR HYMNBABA (AND HIS REASON FOR BEING THERE) LATER--
--SINCE IT THUS VIS SWITCH SCENES TO NEW YORK, WHERE WE FIND THREE OTHER MEMBERS OF OUR FORMATION CAST IN A SPEEDING GUNJET:
ONE FORMAL AVENGER AND A PAIR OF INTERESTED PARTIES:
BEAST, I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW GOOD IT FEELS TO BE BACK IN ACTION!
THE LAST TIME I FELT THIS WAY WAS IN THE WAR, FIGHTING WITH THE OLD LIBERTY LEGION!
HOW 'BOUT YOU, HONEY?
TICKLED TO BE BACK?
MORE THAN YOU KNOW, BEAST.
BOB FRANK HAS RETURNED FROM RETIREMENT! BUT I'VE RETURNED FROM THE DEAD.
WHAT?
CAME TO EXPLAIN THAT STATEMENT, IRONJER MAN?
"THERE'S LITTLE TO EXPLAIN, WHISTLER. BECAUSE LITTLE OF WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME MAKES SENSE.
"I WAS ONCE A MAN NAMED JOHNNY WILLIAMS. BROKEN AND BITTER, EMBITTERED BY BARON ZEMO, THE ENCHANTRESS AND EXECUTIONER TO BECOME A CHEMICALLY ALTERED SUPER-BEING.
"FURTHER! TO JOIN THE AVENGERS--
"AVENGERS" #4 - 6.
"--AND THEN TO DESTROY THEM!
--AND DIED, PASSED BY KANG'S TREACHERY.
"THAT'S RIGHT, JANE. ER, YOU'RE LOOKING AT A DEAD MAN.
MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY OF THEM AT THAT TIME, I ALMOST SUCCEEDED--!
"BUT AT THE LAST MOMENT I HAD A FLICKER OF HEART.
"AND I'M EVEN MORE CONFUSED THAN YOU."

"He captured the ambiance of the Avengers; he walked into the strip and he knew exactly how to do it, which isn't always the case with people."

"I was doing all this complex stuff—I had the Avengers and the Squadron Supreme and Kang and the Serpent. George was the kind of guy who would say, 'Yeah, let's throw the kitchen sink in, too.'"

—Steve Englehart

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pages, wowed the veteran Englehart.

"In those days, you could get by drawing less, you could get by cranking it out and not caring—people did it—but neither of those things was evident in George," he says. "George *did* care about the work, and he *was* having a good time. He was doing whatever he needed to do in order to make it work."

Including playing to type, so to speak. Pérez had found inspiration for his *Avengers* work in the Neal Adams run on the series, so his characters tended to have the "more elastic, based on photo-realism nature" that Adams used.

"But because A) I'm not Neal Adams and B) I was just starting out in the industry, I was going too far off model when I was doing the *Avengers*," Pérez confesses. "Captain America did not look like Captain America. Other characters were done too much in my style, sacrificing what they should look like according to the Marvel model sheets."

It wouldn't be until a little while later that he looked back at some issues from the Adams run and saw places where Neal's Captain America faces appeared to have been redrawn by another artist.

That's when it clicked.

"They didn't want a Neal Adams face; they wanted Captain America as interpreted by Neal Adams," he says, "just like they didn't want a George Pérez face wearing Captain America's mask; they wanted Captain America as interpreted by George Pérez."

By that point, Pérez had become known for doing more than just team books; he'd garnered something of a reputation for doing a team of books. *Creatures on the Loose* was canceled, freeing him from the curse of the Man-Wolf, but even so, he was penciling three-and-a-half books a month—*Avengers*, *FF*, "Sons of the Tiger" and the bi-monthly *Inhumans*.

Despite all that work, despite all those pages, Pérez hadn't clearly established his own style. He was, for the most part, always at the service of his inkers, and at that time, most inkers were told to toe the company line, to preserve the house style.

There was also the matter of inking consistency. On *Inhumans*, Pérez had a different inker for each of his five issues; on "Sons of the Tiger," he had 11 inkers in 16 months. As for *The Avengers*, Englehart remembers inker Vinnie Colletta was "well known for not wanting to draw every line that a penciler had drawn, let alone what George would draw."

Such matters aside, Pérez had begun making a name for himself. His star, thanks to the popularity of his two dream team books, was on the rise.

"*Fantastic Four* looked better visually," he says, "because of Joe Sinnott. There was a great sense of dynamics, but Joe gave it the real feeling.

"*The Avengers*...because of some of the really great, wild ideas that Steve Englehart painted, I think I became a better superhero artist. Steve challenged me every single time. It wasn't just, 'Oh great, I get to do the Avengers.'

In the artist's second issue, for example, Englehart threw the team into the Old West. Pérez, who'd never drawn a horse professionally, compares the situation to that of an actor up for a role in a cowboy film who's asked if he can ride a horse.

"If his job's depending on it, he's going to say yes and learn. The horses I drew weren't the best in the world—I was still learning how to draw human beings—but Steve always threw some wild stuff into those stories.

"As much as I enjoyed the Fantastic Four, it followed a fairly normal pattern. Steve was being radical with some of the concepts he had, and I was there for the ride. He gave me a lot to work with. He challenged me. I had some good writers who followed him on The Avengers, but I think they all benefited from the stuff that Steve ignited in my style."

Englehart pushed the envelope at every opportunity, always striving to tell a bigger, more elaborate story. He dreamt big, and in that regard, Pérez was his perfect artist.

"I was doing all this complex stuff—I had the Avengers and the Squadron Supreme and Kang and the Serpent," the scribe explains. "George was the kind of guy who would say, 'Yeah, let's throw the kitchen sink in, too.'

"Many artists would try to do as little as possible. Not George. George, as we all know now, thrives on drawing as much as possible, so that was never a problem. I think Avengers might have been his biggest team. The series showed that he could handle that kind of stuff and thrive on it. He was finding out he thrived on it; the editors were finding out he thrived on it."

So, Englehart adds, were the fans.

"George hadn't fully fleshed out his style, as he would later, but people were very happy with his stuff," he remembers. "George raised the bar—the issues he and I did are considered high points in the series.

"The Avengers seemed to fit what he does so well. I think it was a real happy place, a real good place for George to be."

It was Fantasy Land, the artist says. Almost.

"The reality—*Fantastic Four* and *The Avengers*—came pretty close to meeting the dream," Pérez shares. "The only way the reality didn't match the fantasy is, in the fantasy, I could do no wrong.

"In reality, I had a lot to learn."

As always, life would be the best teacher. During the early half of 1976, just as his Marvel career blossomed, nature intervened, stepping in to give the artist a lesson in appreciation.

The education began with a simple ache, a minor pain in the neck. No big deal, he thought. Just a little kink. Then the pain surfaced in his back. It was a dull sensation, a numbness. Nothing to be worried about,

FANTASTIC FOUR VISIONARIES TPB

The evolution of a Pérez cover

Cover sketch

Pencils

Inks

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After an illness forced him to confront the possible end of his career, Pérez left two of Marvel's biggest titles—Fantastic Four *and* The Avengers—*to focus on improving his craft.*

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Pérez told himself; people get backaches all the time.

Only it didn't stop there. The deadening progressed, extending from his back to his arm to his hand. His right hand. His *drawing* hand.

"I couldn't draw," he says. He was working on *FF* at the time, and realized that—as long as the numbness persisted—he wouldn't be able to complete another page. "I couldn't draw a straight line with a ruler because I could no longer control a pencil. I couldn't even grip a pencil anymore."

At that point, he was still pretty good at being ahead of schedule, so there was enough time for someone else to finish the book and get a fill-in done, but completing the comic wasn't the issue. The issue was the total loss of sensation. The numbness.

FANTASTIC FOUR
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THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
FANTASTIC FOUR
THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE FINISHED AT LAST!
COURTESY OF THE MIND-NUMBING POWERS OF THE SILVERCLAW MAN!
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I CAN SEE!
AND I SEE YOU'RE A HIDEOUS MONSTER!
WHY DON'T WE DO THAT?
YOU'RE NO CHILD-KILLER—AND YOU KILLED ME!!
BUT I'VE RETURNED TO AVENGE MY MURDER!

"I took a shower, and I couldn't even feel the water hitting my body," Pérez remembers. "I didn't know what was going on. I thought, 'My career is over.'"

He had no idea what was happening; the feeling—rather, the lack of feeling—seemed inexplicable; after all, he was only in his early 20s. He began thinking of his future, seeking a way to make sense of his situation, going so far as to contemplate a career as a writer. "I tried to rationalize things," Pérez says. "Tell myself things would be okay."

He needed to see a doctor, but his lack of insurance made the proposition problematic.

"It was one of those types of things that, without insurance, might be an expensive thing," he said. "I just hoped it wasn't something permanent."

As it turned out, it wasn't. Doctors diagnosed him as having a nerve pinch, an affliction that could be treated with electromassage therapy. The procedure, while almost certain to help him, was expensive.

Marvel editor Archie Goodwin intervened on the artist's behalf, assuring him the company would cover his medical bills, an act for which Pérez expresses eternal gratitude.

"The doctors gave me the electromassage," he says. "It was really prickly, but I was able to work again, and that's all that really mattered."

The experience changed Pérez's life. He now knew what it was like to face the end of a dream, and, as much as he'd tried to put a positive spin on the situation, the idea his career could have ended just as it was beginning, the possibility he'd never be able to draw again, frightened him.

"From that point on, my passion was greater than ever," he said. "Nothing makes you more appreciative of something than the danger of losing it. There, I almost lost my ability to draw. I thought I lost it.

"Knowing that I could continue doing what I love to do, what I've been doing since I was a child, it's given me a reputation for being one of the happiest men in comics."

FANTASTIC FOUR
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THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
FANTASTIC FOUR
DON'T LOOK SO STARTLED, YOU STRETCHING FOOL! THE RED GHOST IS BACK!
AT LONG LAST! THE RETURN OF REED RICHARDS' SUPER-POWERS!
NOW NOTHING CAN STOP ME FROM DESTROYING YOU!!!

Returning once again to his drawing board, he knew things had to change. Three-and-a-half books a month was simply too much, even for someone who could—as Pérez had been doing—draw five pages per day.

He left "Sons of the Tiger" and *Inhumans* and, early in 1977, took a leave of absence from *Fantastic Four* and *Avengers*, as well.

"Something had to give," he said. "I'd been doing *FF* and *The Avengers*, but I was still faking it. I didn't worry so much about the anatomy; I didn't worry about getting things right."

It wasn't until his leave of absence from the superhero mainstay titles, during which he worked on the adaptation of the movie "Logan's Run," that Pérez

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realized exactly "how weak I was at drawing real things."

Logan's Run, a futuristic story about a man seeking freedom and the right to live beyond the age of 30, provided Pérez with a challenge: he had to attempt to capture, "to the best of my ability," the art direction of the film.

"The challenge was something I welcomed," he said. "It was different than anything I had done before."

Pérez and editor Goodwin had gotten to see a finished print of the film and, thinking they could create effects in the comics far greater than those produced by Hollywood studio, decided to try to make the comic adaptation *better* than the film.

From an artistic standpoint, achieving that goal would require a great deal of work—"Logan's Run" used a variety of matte paintings and incredibly detailed miniatures (for which it would eventually earn a special Oscar) to create the futuristic Earth.

"The filmmakers sent me some slides as reference, but I didn't have a slide projector," Pérez recalls, "so I wound up looking at them through a light."

For the first time in his career, the artist regularly used references to draw "correctly." He was forbidden from making the characters in the comic look like the actors—Marvel didn't have the right to use the likenesses of the cast—so he put all his energies into making the backgrounds look as realistic as possible.

"I really liked the way it looked," he said.

The penciler painstakingly recreated the nation's capital (Logan escapes to a long-abandoned Washington D.C.), drawing both from photo references of the city's more significant monuments and his memories of the film. Once the structures themselves were rendered accurately, he allowed his creative side to "play around a little bit," decaying the buildings and, as he remembers, "adding vines to the Washington monument."

"I enjoyed the process so much," Pérez said, "that I said I should slow down and really learn to draw."

Around the same time, the bottom had begun to drop out on the comic industry; a lot of the black-and-white work disappeared, DC canceled a number of titles, and— in Pérez's words—"quite a number of artists were losing jobs."

The penciler knew that if he expected to have a lengthy career, he had to make himself too valuable to fire. That, combined with the sense of satisfaction he'd felt doing *Logan's Run*, inspired him to reexamine his style, revise his artistic approach.

He wouldn't allow himself to become a slave to a perfectionist's ideal, but he did seek to further his knowledge of the craft, of motion and the human form. He wanted to understand how a figure would turn, as opposed to faking it, then realizing he "just removed three ribs from the guy to make him move like that."

"I wanted to do all that without sacrificing the storytelling and sense of dynamics I had on the superhero books," he said.

Pérez returned to *FF* and *Avengers* right after *Logan's Run*, but did so as a different kind of professional. He was trying, working, at becoming a better artist, and the results were considerable—he was, at long last, evidencing what would become known as the Pérez style.

When he began his runs on Marvel's team titles, George primarily drew the heroes as big, Marvel-esque, muscular characters. "I had a more bombastic style then," he says. "I was doing it very much the Marvel way, where my characters were bigger, fuller, a`la the Jack Kirby, John Buscema school."

On his second go-around, however, he started paying more attention to the drawing, to references and things like fashion and architecture. His characters began exhibiting a degree of refined individuality most of his earlier superhero work lacked.

"I initially tried to understand different body language, but I wasn't a good enough artist at the time to make it really subtle," he explains. "I look back at my early *Avengers* books and don't see much of a difference between Captain America and Hawkeye. Maybe one had a slightly lantern jaw, one had a slightly rounded jaw. That was about it, as far as I saw. But after *Logan's Run*, I started to become a better artist."

George started peering beneath the cowls of the superheroes he was drawing, a definite benefit at a time when most artists had three or four stock faces and forms. Rather than viewing his subjects as costumed characters, he thought of them as characters in costumes, looking behind the masks and putting his own spin on the personalities residing therein.

"I cast the character, and I could never again lose them," he says. "The character would behave a certain way, stand a certain way. If a person reacts to a joke one way, another person may not react the same way. Or react at all. One person may be more affectionate in his relationships than another. When I draw the Vision, the Vision's a little more aloof. He stands a little bit to the side, his hands don't gesticulate as much; he's very small in his motions. The Beast is manic energy. There are no boundaries with the Beast. The Wasp was a much more extroverted young lady. Wanda was a little shyer, even though she was dressed more provocatively."

Judging by those nuances, those refinements, Pérez *was* becoming a better artist, but for him, being a better artist meant taking more time. His post-*Logan* return to superhero titles marked the end of the very prolific Pérez period and the beginning of an era when it was much harder for him to maintain a monthly schedule.

"I was putting in so much work," he says. "I was so anal, putting so much into the detail work that it was taking me a long time."

Given the lack of any royalties, the time-consuming nature of his style bore no fruit: "When I was doing *The Avengers*, I was putting a lot of detail in, then realized that if I wanted to maintain a monthly book, I had to do

Logan's Run, *the adaptation of the cult favorite sci-fi film, offered Pérez the type of challenge he longed for. "It was different than anything I had done before," he said.*

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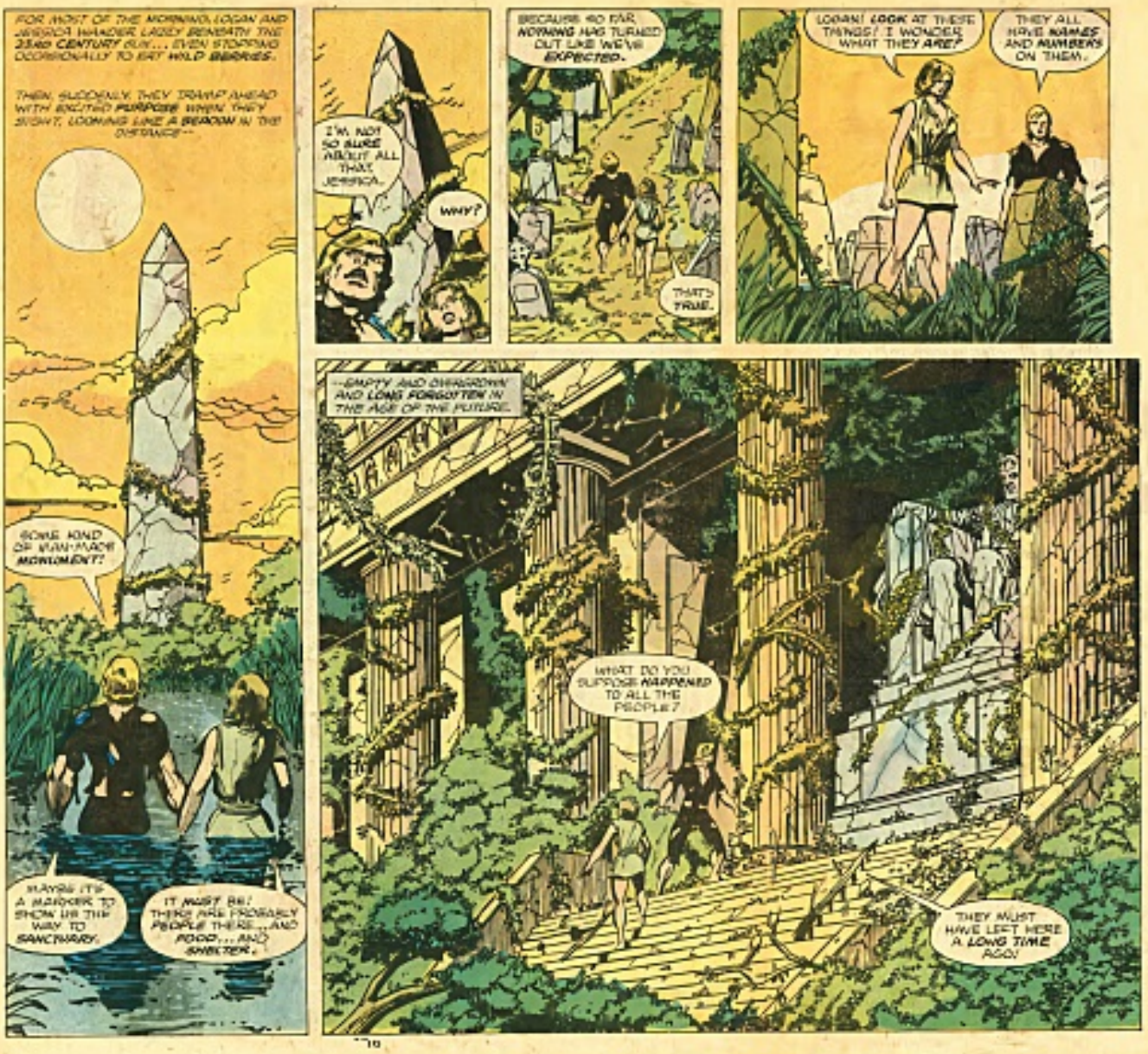
FOR MOST OF THE MORNING, LOGAN AND JESSICA WANDER LAZILY BENEATH THE 23rd CENTURY SUN... EVEN STOPPING OCCASIONALLY TO EAT WILD BERRIES.
THEN, SUDDENLY, THEY TRAMP AHEAD WITH EXCITED PURPOSE WHEN THEY SIGHT, LOOMING LIKE A BEACON IN THE DISTANCE--
SOME KIND OF MAN-MADE MONUMENT!
MAYBE IT'S A MARKER TO SHOW US THE WAY TO SANCTUARY!
IT MUST BE! THERE ARE PROBABLY PEOPLE THERE...AND FOOD... AND SHELTER.
I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT ALL THAT, JESSICA.
WHY?
BECAUSE SO FAR, NOTHING HAS TURNED OUT LIKE WE'VE EXPECTED.
THAT'S TRUE.
LOGAN! LOOK AT THESE THINGS! I WONDER WHAT THEY ARE?
THEY ALL HAVE NAMES AND NUMBERS ON THEM.
--EMPTY AND OVERGROWN AND LONG FORGOTTEN IN THE AGE OF THE FUTURE.
WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE HAPPENED TO ALL THE PEOPLE?
THEY MUST HAVE LEFT HERE A LONG TIME AGO!
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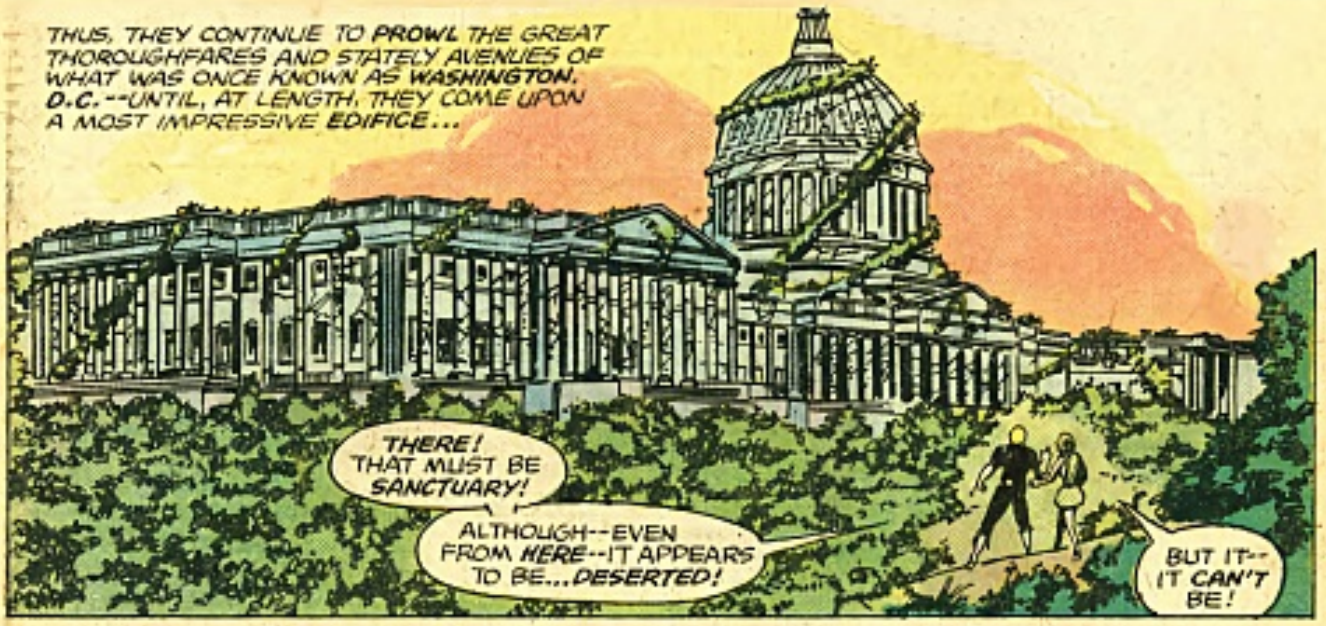
The penciler painstakingly recreated the nation's capital (Logan escapes to a long-abandoned Washington D.C.), drawing both from photo references of the city's more significant monuments and his memories of the film.


THUS, THEY CONTINUE TO PROWL THE GREAT THOROUGHFARES AND STATELY AVENUES OF WHAT WAS ONCE KNOWN AS WASHINGTON, D.C.--UNTIL, AT LENGTH, THEY COME UPON A MOST IMPRESSIVE EDIFICE...
THERE! THAT MUST BE SANCTUARY!
ALTHOUGH--EVEN FROM HERE--IT APPEARS TO BE...DESERTED!
BUT IT-- IT CAN'T BE!

a layout instead. My layouts were the equivalent of what my old pencils used to be. I was trying to simplify my work just enough to get it done on a monthly basis. Usually, I would end up going on and off books here and there. When I can't put all the work in I want to, I start getting less enthused about the job itself, and, when I get less enthused, I probably work a little slower. Then you can't stay on a book.

"I ended up doing just *The Avengers* for a while because that's all I could manage. From a guy who used to do three-and-a-half books a month, I was struggling to do just one."

Salvation seemingly materialized in Jim Shooter's scripts for a storyline that would come to be known as the "Korvac Saga." It was to be a cataclysmic Avengers tale, one unlike anything Pérez had ever crafted, a cosmic battle in the truest sense of the phrase, pitting the Avengers and the Guardians of the Galaxy against a god. Not an Asgardian god, like Thor, or a Greek god, like Hercules (who, in a nod to Pérez's boyhood days, is mistaken by a child for actor Steve Reeves), but the kind of god who could—and would—kill the Avengers.

Two teams of superheroes fighting an all-powerful entity: it would have been difficult to imagine a tale more likely to excite the artist. "The Korvac Saga" was, in fact, written with Pérez in mind—within the first four issues, he had the opportunity to draw more than 20 heroes, at least four massive action scenes and one battle that took place simultaneously on three planes of existence. "Korvac" was to be his shining moment on the series.

"Was" being the operative word. After penciling the fourth issue of the saga, Pérez pulled out.

"I just got slow," he said.

"I couldn't handle it anymore. I was going through a divorce around that time—things just were not good for me then. I had to drop out of the monthly title just to recoup.

"I double-crossed poor Jim Shooter. He started the story with me, thinking we were going to have this big epic, and then I bailed on him. I felt bad he couldn't get the story finished as we were originally intending it. It was all on me. It had nothing to do with anyone else. Jim did a fine job; "The Korvac Saga" seems to have a fond place in a lot of fans' memories.

"It's a shame I didn't finish it."

Though he continued to draw an occasional cover for the series, Pérez's interior artwork disappeared from *Avengers* for almost two years. His reputation had already begun to crumble prior to his departure—he hadn't worked steadily on any book for more than six months (he only completed 16 issues of *FF* in five years' time); his problems with deadlines necessitated having a backup artist at hand at all times—and removing himself from the public eye would do nothing to remedy the situation. His standing in the industry had deteriorated to the point rumors began circulating that he was quitting the business.

The rumors struck a chord within Pérez. Comics were his life. His passion. Recent changes in the medium had forced more than a few artists out of the business, and George was determined not to join them.

"I was aware," he said, "aware that if I wanted to stay in comics, I had to produce. I had to make myself important."

George Pérez would return to work, he would once again pencil the exploits of Earth's Mightiest Heroes, but it seemed his fortunes—if, at this point, they were still worthy of speculation—lay somewhere other than Marvel Comics.

It was then that Marv Wolfman called with an offer from DC. Something about the Teen Titans.

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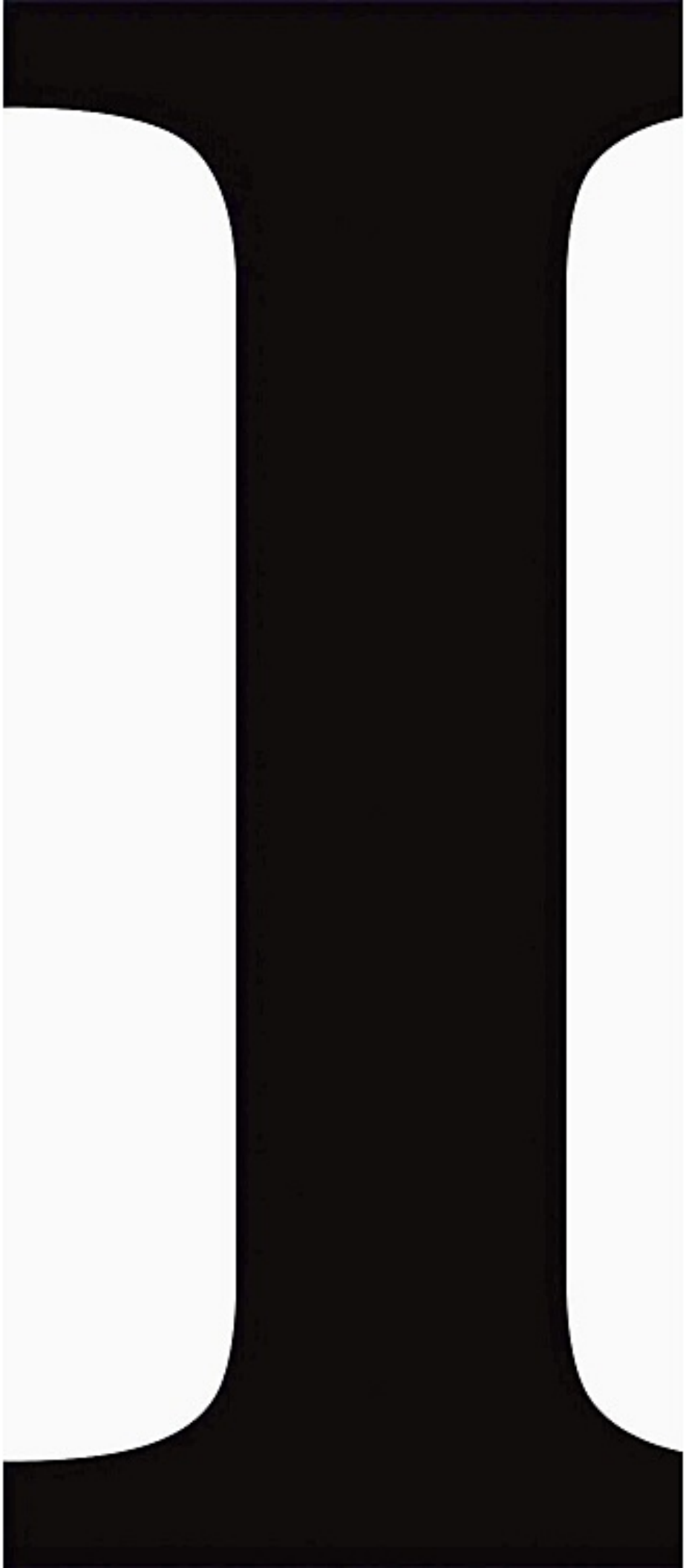

III

A STAR IS BORN

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"Titans *was the little engine that could. No one expected it to go as far as it did, and it went beyond expectations. I think it will always have that place as being the turning point in my career. More people saw what I could do because of the* Titans."

© DC Comics

Comics are for kids, right?

Isn't that what comics are: hormonally charged adolescent fantasies captured in pretty pictures and packaged as literary junk food; boyish flights of fancy chock full of testosterone titans and their impossibly curvy companions, girls (good and bad) who make Marilyn Monroe, Farrah Fawcett and Britney Spears look downright homely?

With their superpowers, their flashy costumes and their alliterative catchphrases, comics provide juvenile entertainment; childish distractions devoid of any societal, cultural or educational value, right?

Actually, no. By the time 1980 rolled around, comics had evolved, separating themselves from the campy, shlocky stories of yesteryear to tackle real world issues such as addiction, racism and sexuality.

By the start of the 80s, David Michelinie and Bob Layton had Tony Stark (Iron Man) battling alcoholism, Frank Miller routinely tested Daredevil's "Man Without Fear" tag, and Chris Claremont and John Byrne sacrificed—killed—a superhero.

Yes, the comics of the day were still intended primarily for youth, but the art form had unquestionably matured, moving away from the simplistic fables of yesteryear and evolving into something that truly challenged fans' minds, something far less akin to juvenile entertainment and more like young adult literature, myths for the minds of the young.

But where in those comics for young adults were the young adults? Scott Summers, despite living at a school, didn't seem much like a modern-day teenager, and Peter Parker, for the most part, fended for himself. The teens in comics played to the imagination, but in terms of resonance...seriously, how could the average fan empathize with the likes of Johnny Storm, Warren Worthington III and Dick Grayson? They all had cars, motorcycles and/or flying machines. They all had movie-star good looks. They all had cool lives.

There were, really, no children...no teenagers...in comics with whom the teenage audience could relate.

At least not until George Pérez and Marv Wolfman came along.

With *The New Teen Titans*, Wolfman and Pérez gave readers a team of characters close to their own age, characters with whom they could, in principle, identify. The Titans were adolescents searching for identity, forging friendships and, beset by universal insecurities, facing the uncertainty of the future. Their ranks included a son of wealth and a kid from the ghetto, an orphan and a daughter of royalty. One of them simply wanted to go to college.

They were real, as real as superheroes can get, and reality proved popular. Very popular. *The New Teen Titans* would not only become one of the best-selling series of the decade; it would reinvigorate the flagging comic company that produced it (DC) and spark a renaissance—the first renaissance—of George Pérez's career.

Pérez closed out the 70s suffering through one of the roughest periods of his life; personal problems—specifically, his divorce—sapped his energy and hampered his work. Once known for his ability to churn out pages (as many as five a day), he'd become an absolute nightmare when it came to deadlines—he was creatively paralyzed, unreliable, almost unemployable.

But Pérez was no fool. He knew comics to be a transient business, that fame and success were evanescent, that the longer an artist stayed away, the greater the chance someone would pick up a pencil and replace him. Unless he wanted his livelihood, his career, his life, to totally slip away, he'd have to find a way back into the game.

"If I wanted to stay," he offers, "I had to make myself important."

The question he asked himself was "How?"

The answer came from Wolfman.

Pérez's old friend and former editor called on behalf of DC Comics, intending to gauge George's interest in working on a new title. Despite the penciler's recent woes, Wolfman considered him "without a doubt, one of the best artists in the business," and thought he'd be a great fit for his upcoming project—a revamp of the Teen Titans.

"So what do you think," Wolfman asked. "Would you like to do it?"

Pérez's response rolled readily off his tongue: "No."

"I wasn't interested," he says. "I loved the Teen Titans as a kid, but didn't care for any of the incarnations that followed the Nick Cardy/Bob Haney days."

But...

"I would be willing to do a *few* issues of the Teen Titans," Pérez told his one-time "Sons of the Tiger" editor, "if DC will give me a crack at the Justice League."

The artist's love for the Justice League paralleled his love for the Avengers; just as *Avengers* provided him with a chance to draw Captain America, Thor and Iron Man, penciling *Justice League of America* would allow Pérez to deal with all of DC's icons in one book.

The powers-that-be at DC agreed to the deal, thinking Pérez could spell regular *JLA* artist Dick Dillin when he'd go on vacation. Maybe he could even do an annual.

That sounded fine to Pérez. "As long as you can give me a JLA story someday."

Someday arrived slightly more than a month later, when George received the news Dillin passed away. Suddenly, the Justice League belonged to him, if he wanted it. Though he'd already begun work on *Teen Titans*—and, a few months earlier, resumed drawing *Avengers* for Marvel— the decision to pick up DC's premiere super-team title wasn't too difficult.

"I was still committed to doing the *Titans*," he said, "but I figured it would be canceled in six issues."

DC's track record at the time was anything but exemplary—the company had made a habit of launching new series, only to end them unceremoniously a few months later. Titans, if the previous incarnations were to be any indicator of success, would likely be one of those titles.

Likely.

As time went on, George disliked the idea of that "likely" less and less:

"I was loving doing the JLA and enjoying doing the Teen Titans," he says, "but as we got more and more into *Titans*, I realized there was something incredibly gratifying about doing characters from scratch.

"Even though we had Wonder Girl and Robin and Flash, the new characters gave it a feeling of participation, creative participation, I had not really known before. I was really enjoying that."

Again, as it had at the House of Ideas just a few years earlier, Pérez's meticulous art style made it difficult for him to do more than one book a month. He'd dropped *Avengers* not long after going over to DC, which led to speculation he was upset with Marvel ("I wasn't. I just ran out of time."), but the additional hours he gained each month still weren't enough—he needed to quit one of his two DC series.

"After doing *JLA* for a few months, enjoying it," he says, "I never quite found the rhythm I wanted, so when it came to decide whether to stay on *JLA* or *Titans*, I said, 'I'm a parent of the *Titans*. Let's see where Marv and I are going with that.'"

Wolfman feels the decision was a vital one, essential for his partner's development as an artist:

"I don't think you become yourself until you're on a book that you make your own," he says. "You can *never* make the Avengers your own. You can do the best *Avengers* ever, but there are 190 issues before you.

"George's work was phenomenal, but I think that—for himself—he needed to take that one extra step and create something. He could've achieved that on *Justice League*, as well, because *Justice League*, frankly, had never been done all that well. There were periods that it was excellent, but it was never as good as *Avengers* at its best.

"Since George wanted to do the *JLA*, that was one of the things used to help him make the decision to come over to DC, he would've achieved the same success with *JLA*. But with *Titans*, he was—for the first time—able to design all his own heroes. And he did it so well."

Contemplating the character profiles generated by Wolfman and series co-creator Len Wein, the artist generated a round of sketches and costume designs for the cybernetic Cyborg, the alien princess Koriand'r and the empathic Raven.

It turned out to be the *only* round of sketches and designs—Pérez handed in his drawings and neither Wein nor Wolfman changed a thing. "They were perfect," the latter admits. "He got them on the very first drawing."

Together, Pérez and Wolfman (with Wein as editor) created a distinctive voice for *The New Teen Titans*, one so promising DC invented new ways to promote it, inserting a special 16-page Teen Titans preview story into *DC Presents* #26.

"They'd never done a preview comic like that before," Pérez says. "That's how much faith they had in the *Titans*—they wanted to give it a big push and did so by allowing it to be put in one of their better-selling comics for free."

Fans took notice, and Wolfman and Pérez took it from there. *The New Teen Titans* became a phenomenon; every month, more and more readers jumped onto the book's bandwagon, seeking to experience its dynamic blend of characters old (Robin, Wonder Girl and Changeling/Beast Boy) and new (Starfire, Raven and Cyborg), its potent combination of action-adventure and adolescent growing pains.

Above all else, Pérez believes readers turned to—and stayed with—Teen Titans for its sense of family:

"That's what made the Fantastic Four so successful," he explains, "what made it different from the Avengers. I think that's what made the Titans different from the X-Men. The X-Men were a group of people with a common bond, but they didn't have the same familial feeling that the Titans did.

"Because some of the Titans were totally new, there was a feeling of evolution to the characters. They were kids, but they were growing. They were growing up, and they were having problems that were unique to young people.

"The X-Men were teenagers in name only. They seldom acted like teenagers. The Titans were teens. It was part of their title.

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Marv played up on the fact that they are teenagers, and we dealt with a lot of the problems that were not necessarily unique to teens at the time, but universal to teens at that age."

Wolfman wanted to avoid doing stories that would be immediately dated, refusing to mar the book with the pseudo-hip dialogue that characterized earlier versions of the Titans.

"Marv did not try to make a time capsule," Pérez states. "Fashions have changed, technology has changed—they use a phone with a wire—but the things that the Titans do, the situations they face, those are the types of things young people always seem to face. Here we are, 24 years since we first started, and the stories are still as immediate, as timely, as they were when we did them.

"We tried to find a universal feeling of youth."

Inherent in that youth is the need for support, something the Titans always provided for one another.

"That feeling of love for each other is something every person feels a need for," the artist says. "The X-Men were alienated; the Titans had no such alienation. They were not shunned by society, so they already had a certain stability.

"They also had needs—Kory's background, Raven's background, Cyborg's background. Even Dick's relationship with Batman. We had a nice fertile ground to investigate personalities, to look at what it's like to get past those teen years."

Investigating those personalities is something at which the Titans creative team excelled; though the series featured its share of titanic battles, pandimensional epics and interstellar clashes, it's the so-called "smaller" stories that stand out most prominently in the minds of fans and creators alike.

Ask Wolfman or Pérez to name their favorite *Titans* tales, and the odds are good "A Day in the Lives," from issue #8, will be the first they mention. The story, as the title suggests, peeks in on the off-duty Titans as they establish their lives, their identities, outside the Spandex. Donna Troy (Wonder Girl) directs Koriand'r in a photo shoot, and Dick Grayson heads back to the big top. Raven conquers her inner demons, Garfield Logan (Changeling) and Victor Stone (Cyborg) visit Vic's old neighborhood, and Wally West (Kid Flash) returns to the Midwest.

Easily the most personal of the Titans' first-year stories, "A Day In The Lives" salved Pérez's decision to give up *Justice League*. "After that issue, I said to myself, 'You know, this is fun,'" the artist admits. "I opted to stick with *Titans* then. Better to have a long run on one book than a scattershot run on two, so I dropped the Justice League and focused my attentions on the Titans."

The duo continued their search for identity in issue #38, "Who is Donna Troy?', a multi-layered love story—"A great, great issue," Pérez says—that spotlights Dick Grayson's detective prowess as he endeavors to piece together the shards of Wonder Girl's past.

"If I wanted to stay (in comics)," Pérez said, "I had to make myself important." The New Teen Titans allowed him to do just that.

For the 50th issue, Wolfman and Pérez pulled out all the stops to portray the wedding of Wonder Girl. The creators wanted to prove they could pull off a superhero union without the superhero garb, and, with the exception of Raven, who didn't attend the wedding, no hero is shown in costume—not even on the cover.

"The *Titans* allowed us something that was very unique in superhero comics," Pérez says. "The fans loved the characters as individuals so much that we were able to do an issue where they didn't have to be in costume, they didn't have to go into superheroics, their characterizations carried them through the entire story.

"Every fan who read the series loved that issue."

Titans marked a turning point in Pérez's career; the star he'd established on *Avengers* went nova after *Titans*' release, turning him into an unquestioned, indisputable comics superstar. Pérez gained instant marketability—DC placed the names of the creative teams on the covers of its books, a practice Marvel had not yet emulated.

"*Titans* was the first book I worked on that no one expected to succeed," the artist said. "Its success was based on what Marv and I did."

Titans transcended all predictions; right out of the gate, it sold better than anyone—even the creators—anticipated. By the time the fifth or sixth issue hit the stands, the *Titans* team realized the book was—as Pérez describes—"really starting to cook."

BONG!
HUH?
WHAT IN BLAZES? OHHH.
UHHH, MISTER...
YEAH? WHAT DO YOU WANT, KID?
MY BALL...
...PLEASE...?
YER BALL?
YER BALL?
AGAIN HE LAUGHS, A DEEP PLEASANT LAUGH.
SURE, KID...
HIT ONE TO RIGHT FIELD FOR ME, HUH?
M-MISTER... YOUR HAND...!
NUTS! HE'S GONNA SCREAM. MUST THINK I'M SOME KINDA MONSTER!
BUT...
WOW. IT'S REAL NEAT. I WISH THEY GAVE ME ONE LIKE THAT.
I MEAN, ALL THEY GAVE ME WAS THIS REG'LAR ONE.
HUH? I DON'T GET IT.
MY HAND. IT'S A PROS... PROSMETIC ...WELL, YOU KNOW...
A PROSTHETIC... AN ARTIFICIAL ARM.
JOHNNY? WHAT'S TAKING YOU SO LONG? AND HAVEN'T I TOLD YOU NOT TO BOTHER-- OHHHH.
IT'S OKAY, MISS SIMMS. HE'S JUST LIKE US. HE'S GOT A PROS... A NEW HAND, TOO.
ONLY HIS IS REAL SHINY AN' REAL NEAT.
SOMEONE PINCH ME AN' WAKE ME UP!
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The latter scene, in which Cyborg—an athlete whose dreams of greatness were shattered when an accident mandated half his body be rebuilt with cybernetics—picks up a bat and plays baseball with a team of prosthetic-wearing children was, Wolfman says, "absolutely all George."

By issue #12, DC implemented a royalty plan, a move that, for the first time, granted creators access to sales records, quantifying for Wolfman and Pérez the popularity of the series they'd built. *Titans* was, in fact, the only book at DC that sold well enough to make any royalties.

"The series helped turn DC Comics around," Pérez proudly proclaims. "I had an actual participation in a turning point, not only for my own career, but for an entire company—a lot of DC's success since then can be attributed to that point, to 1980, when Marv and I worked on *The New Teen Titans*.

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN. BUT YOU STILL SHOULDN'T BOTHER STRANGERS.
SO, WHO'S A STRANGER? MY NAME'S NO STRANGE.
AND I'M SARAH SIMMS, THEIR TEACHER.
TEACHER? I DON'T GET IT?
ALL THESE KIDS GO TO A SPECIAL SCHOOL. THEY ALL HAVE PROSTHETICS OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER.
AND THEY'RE OUT HERE, WELL... TO RELEARN THINGS.. TO SHOW THEM THEY CAN LEAD A FULL LIFE AGAIN.
SOME OF THEM WEREN'T SURE BEFORE.
BUT NOW, THEY'RE LEARNING, ALMOST FORGETTING THEIR PROBLEMS.
MISS SIMMS, CN HE PLAY WITH US? CN HE, CN HE?
KIDS, HE'S PROBABLY VERY BUSY, AND...
BUSY? MISS SIMMS, SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK I GOT ANOTHIN' MORE IMPORTANT TO DO THAN PLAY SOME BALL.
MAN, NEVER THOUGHT I'D SAY THAT AGAIN.
SO YOU SIT DOWN AN' RELAX.
HEY! I'M ABOUT TO HAVE SOME LONG OVERDUE FUN!
C'MON, YOU CRUMMY KIDS -- LAST ONE TO THE DIAMOND'S A LOUSY IMPERIAL STORMTROOPER!

© DC Comics

"We found something that could match the success of *X-Men* over at Marvel."

And, like *X-Men* stars Chris Claremont and John Byrne, Wolfman and Pérez enjoyed an incredible creative synergy, a chemistry that enabled them to take their already considerable skills to an even higher level.

Pérez did more than just draw Wolfman's stories; he helmed them, dressing them with the eye of a master set designer and directing them with a visual sensibility that's equal parts Steven Spielberg and John Woo. He was, after all, a storyteller, an action artist and a character creator, and Wolfman availed himself of the full range of his partner's skills.

"You can't work with someone like George and not take every advantage you can to make the book better," the writer says. "If the book is great, you both shine."

"A Day In The Lives" represents the first time Pérez was credited as co-plotter on the title; there are certain scenes in the story—one involving a euphoric Starfire undressing in a park and a heartwarming sequence involving Cyborg and a group of handicapped children—that were not part of the original plot.

The latter scene, in which Cyborg — an athlete whose dreams of greatness were shattered when an accident mandated half his body be rebuilt with cybernetics—picks up a bat and plays baseball with a team of prosthetic-wearing children was, Wolfman says, "absolutely all George."

"That may have been the first plot that we talked out before Marv actually wrote it," Pérez explains. "That's why it would have more of my work in there. From that point on, we co-plotted verbally before Marv would write. He wanted to talk out the story before he actually committed it to type, then I would add things from that point on."

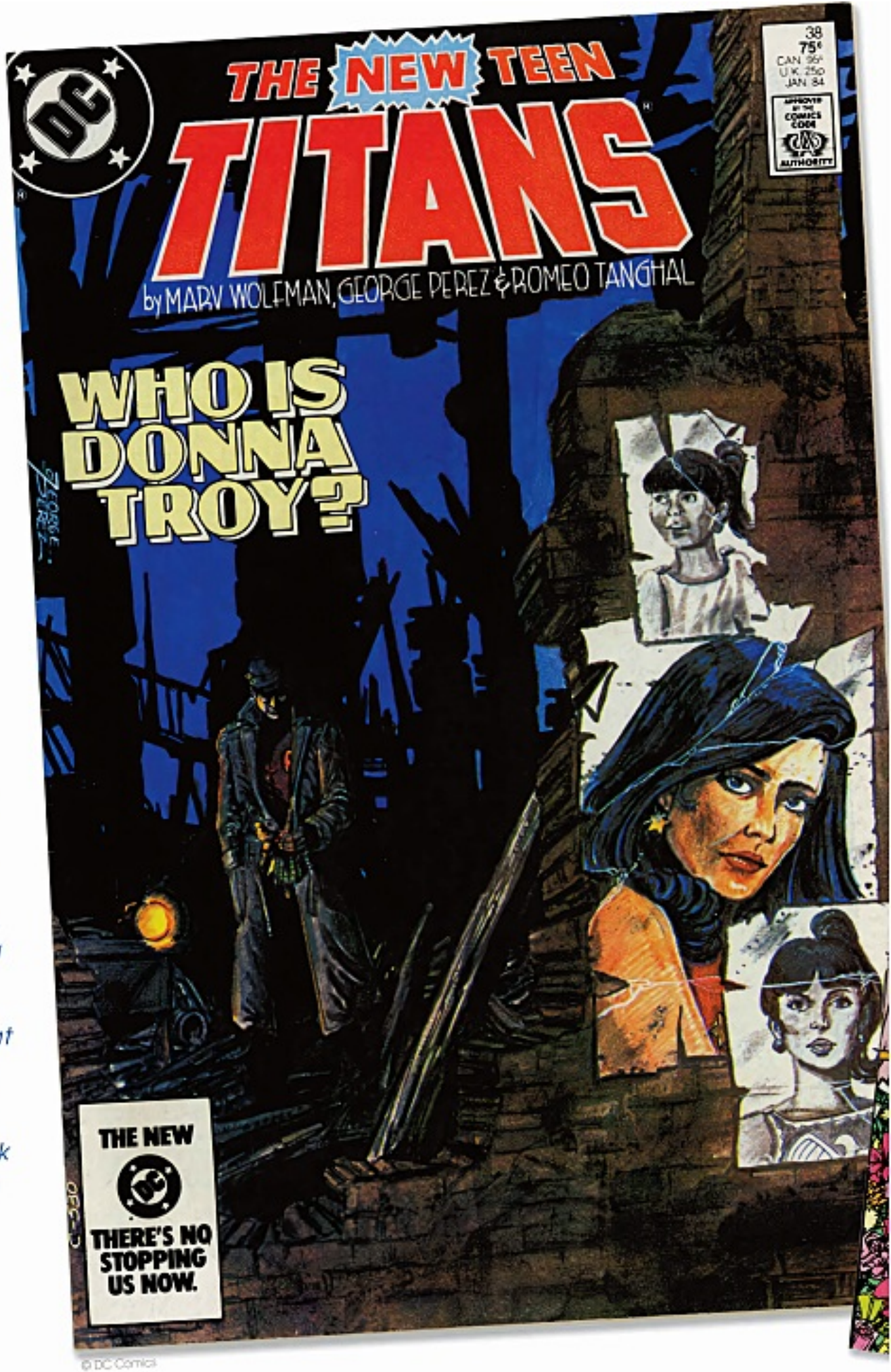
The artist didn't change the stories as much as he did enhance the presentation, which Wolfman states Pérez would always do "in an interesting way."

"I'd never know whether George would decide to toss in a little thing here or there, a little character bit that made the story special," the writer says. "He took what I gave him and did it wonderfully. There were surprises all the time, but the surprises were in how he would do it."

The secret to the duo's chemistry rests in their friendship. They'd known each other for years; worked together before, though on a much smaller scale; and become fast friends. Theirs was a relationship that transferred itself to the printed page—they supported, complemented and inspired one another, all in the service of the story.

"The first time you see a comic, it's conceptually 75 percent art, 25 percent writing," Wolfman says. "What keeps you there is the story. The story has to work both in words and in art. If George's work got you in, the combined story would keep you there."

The strength of the duo's creative connection superceded their individual egos. Wolfman might spend a week, at most, writing a *Titans* script, whereas Pérez would—in all likelihood—spend a month drawing it, a reality that made the thought of demanding strict adherence to the written plots seem counter-productive.



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"My favorite Titans stories have always been the personal ones. 'Who Is Donna Troy?' was done with the motivation that Dick Grayson and Donna's fiancé both love her. I think that's a great, great story."

"The Titans allowed us something that was very unique in superhero comics. The fans loved the characters as individuals so much that we were able to do an issue where they didn't have to be in costume, they didn't have to go into super-heroics, their characterizations carried them through the entire story."

"When you have someone as intelligent as George, someone who's thinking about every aspect of his drawing, he may come up with a better scene," Wolfman says. "Comics is a collaborative effort, and if you're the type of writer who says, 'No, I'm smarter than you,' you'll never get anything good. You might as well be writing paperback novels.

"The art is vital, and, when you have someone like George, you'd be an absolute idiot to say, 'Do it my way or else.' You'd have to be a total moron. You have someone who is infinitely creative; why not let him enhance the work? You both come out better that way."

In time, the relationship between the two became so strong, their creative energies so much in synch, that Pérez began working without a written plot from his partner. The pair would discuss the details of the story they were to tell, and the artist would begin drawing it from memory, providing Wolfman with notes explaining the artwork.

"Essentially, I was writing the plot for Marv," he laughs. "He needed to know what I just drew.

"It was a very, very unique working relationship where we both knew the characters. Either one of us could take the characters and make a story out of it, but together we made better stories."

Satisfying work. Fame. Royalty checks. Pérez even found personal happiness during the time of *Titans*, meeting and falling in love with his wife, Carol Flynn. His enthusiasm, his zest for life, shone as strongly as ever and, consummate artist that he is, he expressed that zeal on the comic page, producing—in *The New Teen Titans*—what was unquestionably his finest work to date.

"I started to become a better artist once I was at DC," he says. "I took all the stuff I had learned from Marvel and started to make it a more personal style, where the characters became a little more human to me. A person would pick up a glass, as opposed to grasping a glass. I learned how to articulate fingers a bit better. Little subtle things like that. It was a metamorphosis of my style."

As he did with the Avengers, Pérez cast DC's teen superstars in his mind. "Because he created the visuals of the characters," Wolfman says, "because he started them from the first drawing, he knew—inside and out—their personalities."

The artist's feelings for—or perhaps, more appropriately, his feel for—each character determined how each one acted. He took Wolfman's viewpoint, his approach to each character, and added his own touch.

"If you're casting a movie, the actor will bring something to the character that wasn't there on the written page," Pérez says. "The page was not written with the actor in mind. Ditto when I started drawing. I recast the cast that worked for me. I designed them. I created the body language, then Marv would add nuances to his writing, something he probably wouldn't have done had another artist done it."

The artist's take on Victor Stone, for example, harkened back to his days in the South Bronx—Cyborg would behave like people Pérez knew from his youth.

"Victor was an urban black man, and I was an urban Puerto Rican with the same type of background," he says. "I would have him react to certain things in certain ways, have him hold things differently. Have him dress certain ways. Those were little subtle things I added just to give it character."

Likewise, when Wolfman would plot an action scene, he would describe the basics of the movement in the sequence and allow all the gradations to be taken care of in dialogue or captions. Pérez would add more characterization in the field of battle, allowing the readers to see not only how the fight was progressing, but how the heroes were feeling while they were fighting.

"The looks on their faces: suddenly, Marv would see a closeup of somebody screaming that wasn't in the plot," the penciler says. "Now he had to add something in there, work in a slight bit of character—I was push-

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"Victor was an urban black man, and I was an urban Puerto Rican with the same type of background. I would have him react to certain things in certain ways...little subtle things I added just to give it character."

Raven, who started off as a typical fullfigured, busty Pérez female, changed so noticeably, the artist's depiction of her differed so radically from her earlier appearances, that the Titans creators wrote it into the series.

The end of Robin/ birth of Nightwing — an event of some note — earned only secondary status in the monumental "Judas Contract" storyline.

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ing Marv in certain directions, just as he was pushing me.

"We were finding that we, a middle-class Jewish guy and a Puerto Rican guy from a lower-income family, found a symbiotic relationship. The characters would have gone one way if George had done it, one way if Marv had done it. The way they're going when we were both on it...I think our style of work was very unique."

While both creators believed in the importance of bonding the characters, in terms of actual characterization, Pérez—admittedly a "more emotional, gregarious person" than Wolfman—preferred to allow the cast members to express themselves.

"The Titans were friends; they were family. Being Latin, I'm more outward in how I express myself," he says. "Kory was an incredibly outgoing person. She would hug or kiss a person at the drop of a hat. Marv had described her as being without inhibitions, and I tried to make her more of a person who is emotionally open.

"Things that Marv would put in there, I would build up on. I would suggest ways of doing things that I thought would be more interesting for the character, and the more I suggested those kinds of things, the more Marv realized there's a lot of the writer in me. He wanted to nurture that.

"Marv, probably more than any other person, was responsible for me doing writing in comics. He nurtured the ideas. 'Yes,' he'd say. 'I want to know what you think about the characters.' That would keep things rolling along."

That exploration of the Titans' personalities led to the visual evolutions of their characters.

"George, when he got on the Titans, not only saw the characters as individuals; he realized—unlike his contemporaries at the time—that if Raven was one type of character, she needed to have a physical type that reflected her personality," Wolfman relates. "She needed to have her own face. It wasn't all Betty and Veronica faces anymore.

"The Titans started with very similar faces. Look at the first couple of issues; there isn't a lot of difference between Raven's and Starfire's face. There's truly not a major difference."

Within a few months, however, as Pérez started to feel out the characters, he was able to flesh out their physical characteristics and their mannerisms: how the character moved, how the character posed and what was behind their eyes.

It developed to the point that Raven, who started off as a typical full-figured, busty Pérez female, changed so noticeably, the artist's depiction of her differed so radically from her earlier appearances, that the *Titans* creators wrote it into the series.

"What was just a development or an evolution of my style," Pérez says, "we made into a story element."

As an artist, he'd come into his own; *Titans* took the style Pérez formulated on *Avengers* and galvanized it.

"With *The Avengers*, I was interpreting. In *Titans*, I was creating," he says. "There were no new characters of any lasting value in *The Avengers*, but *Titans* was the little engine that could. No one expected it to go as far as it did, and it went beyond expectations.

"I think it will always have that place as being the turning point in my career. More people saw what I could do because of the *Titans*."

Formerly feted for his ability to render explosive action scenes, Pérez learned how to pull away, to draw with subtlety, to do enough with body language to render dialogue unnecessary. On *Titans*, he abandoned his bigger-than-life approach to body types and sought a more realistic look, portraying the Titans as something other than the standard superheroes.

"I was trying to draw them as real teens and trying to develop different body languages, body styles, body types," Pérez explains, giving credit to his wife, Carol. "She was a dancer, and through her, I started to understand movement a little better. We went to a lot of dances together, dance performances, and I started to learn a little more about movement of the body and how you can show so much emotion from the most mild of gestures."

Trying to translate that onto the printed page was, he remembers, a "nice challenge," and because of the emotional involvement he and Wolfman had with the characters, his success in meeting that challenge made empathizing with the Titans a great deal easier.

"We could feel the anger of a character; we could feel the joy of a character," he says. "I smiled every time I would draw a character like Kory. If she's flying, totally enjoying life, I'm smiling the entire time I'm drawing it.

"If one of the characters is angry, I could sense a scowl forming on my face, whether it actually was or not. On occasion, my wife would ask me, 'Honey, are you okay?' I was just involved in a scene, and I'd knit my eyebrows in anger—it was easier for me to figure out how to draw from there. I felt it going from my head to my hands. Because we were so in love with the Titans as characters, it made it very easy to do the body languages. I was acting out everything those characters were going through."

Terra was insane: bitter, malevolent and destined for an early grave. "She was the wolf in sheep's clothing," Pérez admitted. "Slated to die unrepentant from the get-go."

Arguably, the Titan who changed the most due to his handling by Wolfman and Pérez was Robin, generated out of a need to be able to do stories with Dick Grayson as a Titan without having to be concerned about his ties to the Batman books. He was the only member of the Titans who was, in a sense, co-owned by another creative team. Kid Flash didn't co-star in *Flash*, and Wonder Girl had, at best, a peripheral connection with Wonder Woman, but Robin was still the sidekick of the Darknight Detective. Dick's status limited his maturation in *Titans*, as the creative team had to determine how the stories they told, the changes they made to the character, would affect Robin's relationship with Batman.

The only way to get around that, the *Titans* team knew, was to have Dick outgrow being the Boy Wonder.

The odds of success weren't exactly favorable, but there was still a chance, and when Wolfman got wind of a brouhaha in the Batman camp—some of the editors felt Robin was getting too old to be an effective character—he and Pérez made their move. *Titans* was the biggest book at DC at the time, with sales more than triple those of *Batman*, so the duo had some leverage when they recommended Batman find "a new Robin."

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Pérez had his reservations—"We didn't initially think DC would go for it because Robin's iconic"—but those qualms were for naught.

"DC loved the idea," Wolfman relates. "It was totally in our self-interest, but they loved the idea."

Suddenly, the Titans creators were free to do with Dick Grayson as they pleased.

"We'd aged him emotionally," the writer explains, "now we could actually make him the viable character we thought he should be."

"Dick didn't outgrow being Robin because he was no longer good enough," Pérez adds, "he outgrew being Robin because he was so good at being the leader of the Titans that he had gone on to the next step."

That step involved a new costume, a new color scheme and a new name: Nightwing.

Pérez and Wolfman were in such a rhythm at that point in the series, *Titans* had so much going on, was so incredibly popular, that the end of Robin/birth of Nightwing—an event of some note—earned only secondary status in the monumental "Judas Contract" storyline.

"Judas" concluded a number of storylines the creative team had been threading through *Titans* since its earliest days: granting Kid Flash his desire for a normal life, freeing Robin from the frustrations of living in Batman's shadow, and revealing the origin of one of the team's deadliest (and most popular) villains, Deathstroke the Terminator.

It was the opportunity to reveal the truth about the Titan named Terra, however, that made "Judas" so satisfying for the creators.

Terra (Tara Markov) had been introduced roughly a year prior to "The Judas Contract," when she attacked the Statue of Liberty. The Titans swooped in to stop her and discovered that Terra, possessed of incredible earth-controlling powers, had been led astray by terrorists.

As Wolfman recapped in his introduction to the "Judas" trade paperback, the Titans saw Terra as a "wise-mouthed child, lost, alone and confused." The heroes, being heroes, took the girl in and welcomed her, more or less, as one of their own.

That's where the fun began. Wolfman and Pérez knew readers would bring their typical expectations to Terra's introduction; fans have their own conception of character development and the cliches of comic storytelling, and the Titans creators played on both.

"We knew that if George drew Tara as a cute little girl, everyone would assume she'd reform," Wolfman explains.

Everyone was wrong.

Comic readers had just witnessed the debut of young Kitty Pryde in *X-Men*, and presumed that, in unveiling Tara, Wolfman was blatantly ripping off Chris Claremont's act. It happened to be just the effect the writer was looking for.

"It was Marv's great joy to create Terra," Pérez says, "knowing everyone was going to assume she was our version of Kitty, knowing from day one that she was the wolf in sheep's clothing."

Terra was insane: a bitter, malevolent, vicious ally of Deathstroke. Unlike Kitty Pryde, who'd have a protracted career alongside Marvel's Merry Mutants, Tara Markov wouldn't see the last page of "The Judas Contract."

Nor was she ever meant to.

"She was slated to die unrepentant from the get-go," Pérez says. "In that, Marv took what everyone was expecting and turned it on its ear without ever lying to them.

"We were just having fun."

The *Titans* teammates didn't restrict their amusement to "tricks" on the fans, either—they played them on one another, as well. *New Teen Titans* #12 called for a double-page spread filled with Greek gods. When Pérez sent the pages to Wolfman, he intentionally omitted the names of the deities he drew, leaving them off for his partner to identify, based solely on the characters' body language and the approach he took.

Pérez applauds his collaborator's effort: "Marv guessed every one."

"We'd do things like that, back and forth," Wolfman said. "I may throw something in later, in the dialogue, that George was totally not expecting because it wasn't in the plots. I'd throw in something completely out of left field to keep him alert.

"We enjoyed doing that. We were out to make the book good. Neither of us had enough of an ego for fame to try and push in that direction. Our egos were about our talent, not about the need to say, 'Hey, we're great.'"

All good things...all great things...eventually come to an end, and the adage held true for *Titans*. After four-plus years, two series (*Titans* split into *New Teen Titans* and *Tales of the New Teen Titans*) and more than 60 issues, Pérez moved out of Titans Tower.

"I knew I wasn't doing my best work," he says.

In order to keep pace with the regular series, the annuals and the occasional Titans mini-series, Pérez found himself doing loose layouts, and the book was still selling through the roof. That, he says, was dangerous.

"If I could get away with not doing my best work and earn a fortune doing it...I could become complacent. I was not going to grow. I knew I could do better. I had to be in a situation where I was forced to do better. I was not forced to be better on the *Titans*, except by me.

"I left because the book was too successful—I had to move on to something else."

Pérez announced his resignation at a comic book convention, with Wolfman right by his side.

"We announced it together, so no one would ever think it was because of any kind of animosity between us."

No one did, especially considering the project that followed.

Worlds will live, worlds will die, and the universe will never be the same.

To the men and women who called themselves comic fans in the 1980s, those words hold a special significance.

For some, they represent youth, running to the convenience store to spin the creaky comics rack and pluck the latest issue of *Teen Titans* from a metallic pocket. For others, they signify the loss of innocence, serving as a reminder that while some old heroes simply fade away, some do, in fact, die. For a third group, they inspire awe, conjuring spectacular, Technicolor memories of superheroes, supervillains and an evil so powerful it threatened all of space and time.

Worlds will live, worlds will die, and the universe will never be the same.

So promised DC with the release of *Crisis On Infinite Earths*, an unprecedented 12-issue maxi-series intended as the comic equivalent of the Big Bang: a meticulously researched, almost unspeakably complex, dimension-spanning crossover that, after paying homage to DC's history, would scrap it and create a new universe.

It was an adventure like no other, a veritable tidal wave of pop culture superstars.

It was the biggest comic story ever attempted, an ambitious, arduous, grandiose undertaking the likes of which no one had ever seen.

It was the perfect vehicle for the reunion of *Titans* teammates George Pérez and Marv Wolfman. For the former, *Crisis* was a dream made flesh ("I'd always wanted to draw every character in the DC Universe"); for the latter, it was a calling, the story he'd hoped to write since he was a boy.

At the time of *Crisis*' debut in 1985, DC continuity was an absolute mess. A myriad number of Earths existed, all separated by differing vibrational frequencies, each containing its own set of super-powered inhabitants. To long-time fans, the kind who understood concepts like dimensional walls and vibrational frequencies, the existence of two Supermen on two separate Earths made perfect sense, but, to the all-important new reader, advanced calculus seemed more elementary.

Wolfman, well aware of the ever-increasing complexity of the company's comics, thought the time had come to simplify the situation. He pitched DC on what he dubbed a maxi-series: a single, finite storyline that pledged to streamline a half-century of continuity.

After a few days of deliberation, the company's executives agreed, granting their star writer the chance to revamp the entire DC Universe.

"What better gift to the company that began it all," Wolfman wrote in his introduction to the *Crisis* collected edition, "than to help restart its next 50 years."

The writer spent the better part of five years researching the project, assembling the type of monumental, star-studded cast that would've made his Titans collaborator salivate—if Pérez had been in mind for the job.

"When the story was first proposed, there was no artist attached," Wolfman says. "And because it took so long to get the thing working…I don't think George was ever considered.

"I could not have imagined a better artist," the writer adds, "but the series was not created with him in mind."

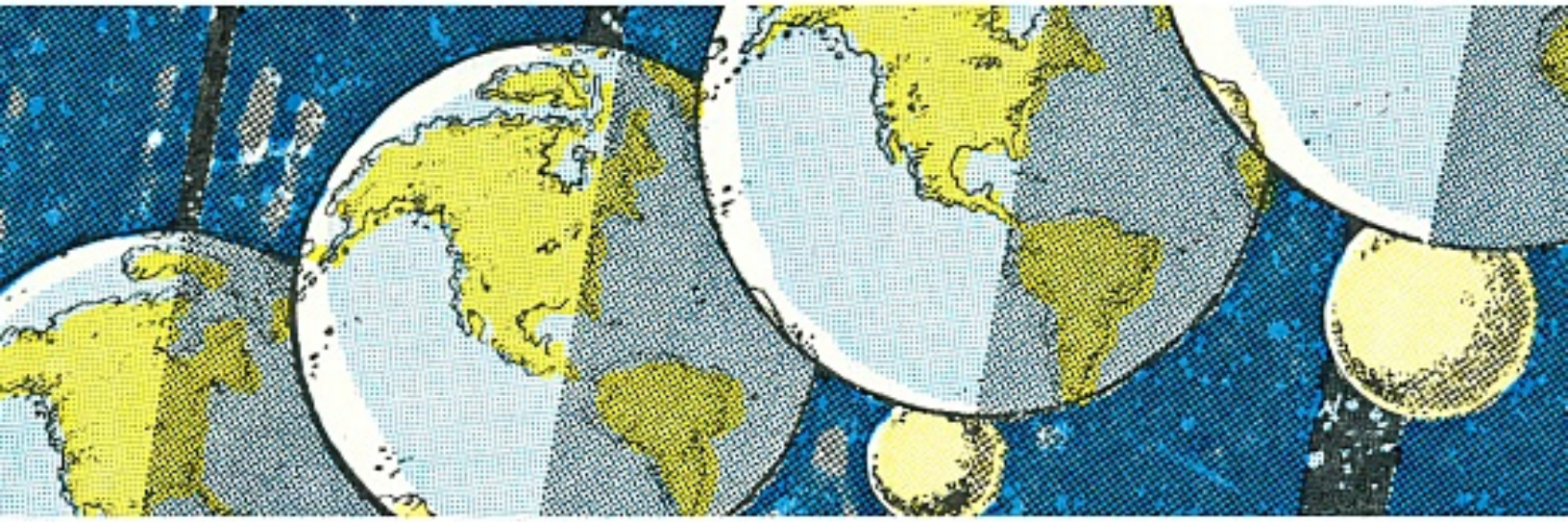
In the minds of comic fans, however, Pérez and *Crisis* will be forever synonymous. The far-reaching scope of the project made it ideal for the character-loving, detail-obsessed artist, and Pérez proved up to the task, packing panel after panel, issue after issue, with some of the most magnificent linework of his career.

"Thanks to Jose Garcia-Lopez, I tried to give *Crisis* a little more," he admits. "Jose followed me on *Titans*, and when I saw his first issue, how incredibly great an artist he is, I knew I had to kick butt. So when I worked on *Crisis*, I put every bit of blood, sweat and tears into those pages, adding details and using interesting panel design and body languages."

The workload was, on its own, substantial, but Pérez—fervent in his desire to progress as an artist—took "substantial" and turned it into "tremendous."

"For me, the biggest test was when they told me they *only* needed certain characters in a specific image," he says. "Then I asked myself, 'How many characters can I draw in the background here?'"

Though the format of the story may not have been



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ideally suited to Pérez's style—*Crisis* averaged 7-8 panels per page, leaving few opportunities for big, "wow" shots—the artist excelled.

"No one else could have done what George did," Wolfman exclaims. "His basic storytelling was so superior to anyone's at the time…no one else could have come close to doing what he did."

Since there were relatively few places within the issues for Pérez to, as Wolfman says, "do what George does best, which is draw big pictures of incredible stuff," the artist brought his "wow-able" abilities to bear on *Crisis*' covers.

Based on a request from Pérez's wife, who felt her husband was pushing himself too hard on the series, Wolfman suggested his artist draw a simple cover for *Crisis*' fifth issue, an uncomplicated image featuring only three faces and two merging Earths.

The cover Pérez submitted did contain two merging Earths—along with 96 faces. Once the artist got started, he couldn't stop drawing; if he saw sufficient open space, he added another character's head. He was simply having too much fun.

"This was a once-in-a-lifetime project," he says. "I was having a hard time going to sleep because I didn't want to leave my drawing board."

Because Pérez didn't follow all of DC's individual titles, the sheer number of characters involved in *Crisis* meant there was a larger learning curve on the project than, say, *Titans*—an actuality that resulted in the need to do reference work. A *lot* of reference work.

"It wore me out—it still takes time to draw that many characters in that many locales in that many pages, but I was having the time of my life," he admits. "I knew that if the DC Universe wasn't going to be the same again, this was going to be my one shot to draw some characters I would never have an opportunity to draw again afterwards. I got to draw the Metal Men. I got to draw Dolphin. I snuck in the Secret Six—who even remembers the Secret Six? I drew characters I had never heard of before.

"It was a lot of fun."

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Not so for Wolfman, who, as *Crisis*' writer and editor, had been going through hell over the project. The story kept expanding (it was originally planned as a ten-issue tale), and because of the planned repercussions of the series, he waged war with the rest of DC's editorial staff on a daily basis. No one had ever done an all-pervasive, company-wide crossover before, and the other editors were not all willing to play along.

"They didn't understand it, they thought it was infringing on their territory," the writer remembers. "Half my time was taken having to be a DC editor, and I couldn't concentrate completely on what I was doing with the writing because of all the other stuff going on behind the scenes."

Which is where—and why—Pérez came in as co-plotter. He and Wolfman had already worked out a perfect method of collaboration on *Titans*, and, though *Crisis* was far more complex, their oft-mentioned chemistry functioned just as fluidly.

His assumption of the expanded role meant, among other things, that Pérez would be considered an even bigger co-conspirator in two of the biggest events in the series—the deaths of Supergirl and the Flash. While he takes full credit for his part in the demise of those heroes, he maintains that, ultimately, all deaths had to be approved by the company's directors.

"Marv was the one who came up with the hit list initially, to see what he could get away with. The Flash was on the list always. He was the start of the Silver Age; he was also the start of that issue that created the twin Earths. That's what caused it [continuity] to spin out of control, as far as Marv was concerned.

"Supergirl was targeted because it was part of a plan to simplify the Superman universe, to make him unique as the sole survivor of Krypton. That meant Supergirl had to go. I think if her movie had succeeded, she'd still be alive.

"The other characters, I think, were earmarked for destruction, some of them because they were other versions of existing characters, like members of the Justice Society who had counterparts on Earth-One, and some because they were largely unimportant characters who, if they were killed, would give you a sense that this was a universe-threatening menace."

Believe it or not, Superman almost perished in *Crisis*, too. The Kryptonian's name appeared on the original hit list, but—unlike Flash or Supergirl—the Man of Steel avoided becoming a casualty of Wolfman's streamlining plan.

The writer's original idea was to relaunch, from issue #1, every DC comic starring characters featured in *Crisis*.

"All of them would have had a clean start," Pérez said. "The creators could incorporate what they did and didn't want from *Crisis*."

But in an effort to avoid alienating its staff and remain as creator-friendly as possible, the company refused to issue a corporate decision mandating the relaunches.

"They tended to be a little wishy-washy in some of the decisions," Pérez said, "which in the case of *Crisis* meant compromising the project."

Crisis could only work as it was intended if everything started from scratch. Characters whose histories were not affected could continue on, but those whose pasts were altered should have those new backstories reflected in their respective series.

"When Superman was not rebooted immediately, when DC allowed characters to continue on as if nothing happened, when crossovers we'd hoped to do were halted, *Crisis* was compromised," Pérez explains. "It compromised what the book was supposed to be, for better or ill. Obviously, the traditionalists say *Crisis* should not have existed at all, but that's what the project was supposed to be about.

"Artistically, it's one of my high points, and the fact it could be reprinted a decade later and still sell incredibly well, both as an expensive hardcover and then as a trade paperback, shows that the story still holds up. It's just that it will only now be a success in its own vacuum. Its initial intent of cleaning up, simplifying, modifying the DC Universe was a failure. DC wouldn't—or couldn't—go the extra nine yards they would need to make it work. In itself, it was a crowning achievement for me because I got to play with a lot of characters, but, for what its purpose was, it failed."

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"In Crisis, the stories had to resonate on a million levels. I can't imagine anyone else having drawn it...Nobody could have done it better, and I don't think anybody could do it better today. Nobody would have had the ability to make all those characters unique. Even the two Supermans don't move in the same way. That's what makes George's work George, that he does that. If I take it for granted, it's not diminishing anything. That's George. He's going to do that because he's incapable of doing anything else."

—Marv Wolfman

"Alex Ross volunteered to do this cover. Originally, I was going to pencil and ink it, and Alex came to me at a San Diego convention and asked if he could paint the cover over my pencils. His only request was that I draw everybody who appeared in the actual series. It's a beautiful, beautiful piece. I can see Alex in it—he did a marvelous job—but I can still see me. I'm flattered he wanted to do it."

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Despite that, the artist considers the maxi-series one of the defining works of the decade. Rightly so, too, considering that, to this day, people now discuss DC history in terms of "pre-Crisis" or "post-Crisis."

"Marv had a definite story idea; he had a mission with *Crisis on Infinite Earths*. Successful or not, the sheer integrity of wanting to do that and seeing your idea through, whether it was successful or not is beyond the point. On its own, *Crisis* is a monumental achievement; Marv did some wonderful writing in it, and I'd like to think I was drawing at the top of my game during the time.

"*Crisis* stands the test of time as an all-around artistic achievement. Reading it as a stand-alone story will confuse you if you don't know DC history, but it's a solid piece that I'm still very, very proud of."

Looking back over the bulk of their 1980s-era collaborations, Wolfman says the enormity of *Crisis* must have made *Titans*, with its handful of characters and largely emotional stories, seem like a walk in the park for his partner.

"In *Crisis*, the stories had to resonate on a million levels," the scribe explains. "I can't imagine anyone else having drawn it.

"Nobody could have beaten George. Nobody could have done it better, and I don't think anybody could do it better today. Nobody would have had the ability to make all those characters unique. Even the two Supermans don't move in the same way.

"That's what makes George's work George, that he does that. If I take it for granted, it's not diminishing anything. That's George. He's going to do that because he's incapable of doing anything else."

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Wolfman suggested his artist draw a simple cover for Crisis' fifth issue, an uncomplicated image featuring only three faces and two merging Earths. The cover Pérez submitted did contain two merging Earths—along with 96 faces.

AND BEYOND!
CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS

CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS

THIS IS IT: THE END OF THE WORLD!
CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS
DEATH OF THE MONITOR!

AT LAST: The ANTI-MONITOR!
CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS

CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS
THE FINAL FATE OF THE FLASH

CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS

CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS
DEATH DAMN TIME!

CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS

GIANT FINAL ISSUE SPECTACULAR!
CRISIS
ON INFINITE EARTHS

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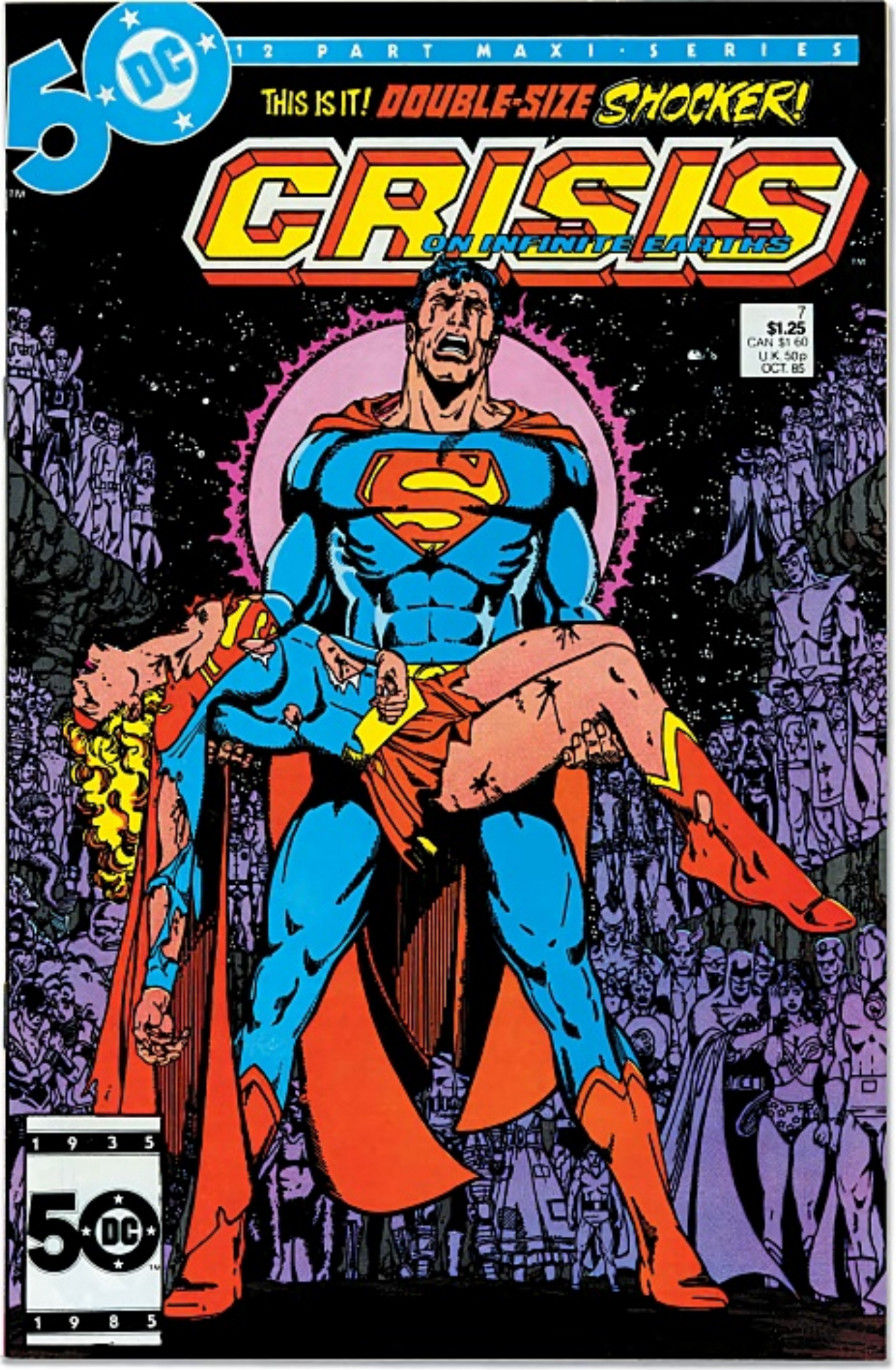

One of the most heralded covers of Pérez's career, this image—perhaps more than any other—embodied the ambitious nature of Crisis on Infinite Earths. "Supergirl was targeted because it was part of a plan to simplify the Superman universe, to make him unique as the sole survivor of Krypton," the artist explained. "That meant Supergirl had to go."

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HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE

Blowing up the DC Universe was a bigger job than *Crisis*' creators thought.

Initially, writer Marv Wolfman intended to revamp the entirety of the DC Universe—past, present *and* future—in ten issues, to which he and Pérez would attach a two-issue epilogue laying out the details of the newly revised history. But the story took on a life of its own, and in the end, Wolfman—who was certain he knew "all the highs, all the lows; where all the major changes, the plot shifts, everything was happening" in *Crisis*—had to expand the story to a dozen chapters.

"It was just getting too large," he said. "The thing kept expanding."

Wolfman and Pérez wouldn't let the historical epilogue slip into history, however. After all, DC, in an editorial announcing the maxi-series, did first dub it "The History of the DC Universe" (Pérez actually came up with the name *Crisis*), and neither writer nor artist wanted to welch on their employers' implicit promise.

Thus, a two-part afterword to *Crisis* was created, bearing the title *History of the DC Universe*.

The idea, Wolfman says, was to do a Time-Life book, an entertaining, referential textbook (of sorts) that would be 80 percent pictures, 20 percent words.

"It was meant to be an art portfolio," the scribe explains. "One where the art would shine and the writing would just move it along."

In many ways, *History* was Wolfman's attempt to "make up" with Pérez for the labor-intensive project that was *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, for which he jokingly estimates his friend was drawing "19,000" panels a page.

"That's why *History* is two or three big pictures, and that's it," he laughs. "It, like a Time-Life book, is essentially a photo book where the text is very secondary to the art."

As far as gifts go, *History* was a good one. Pérez loved the artistic freedom afforded him by the project and reveled in shaping the visual narrative of the "new" DC Universe. He captured the awesome might of the Titans (both the forerunners to the Greek gods and his famous super-team) in amazing splash pages and crafted spectacular double-page spreads detailing events from the winning of the wild West to the War to End All Wars.

Heroes and villains, mortals and monsters, humans and superhumans—Pérez penciled them all; *History*'s cast list included everyone from Arion and the All-Star Squadron to Zatara and Zatanna. DC's first masked hero, the Crimson Avenger, showed up, as—of course—did the company's greatest icon, Superman.

Batman, Captain Marvel and Wonder Woman; the Warlord, the Phantom Stranger and the Trigger Twns; Blackhawk, Arak and Omac all appeared on *History*'s pages, all rendered in Pérez's intricate, expressive, personal style.

"George was able to just draw," Wolfman says, "to have some fun without it being overly complicated.

"He did a phenomenal job, some really wonderful work on that book."

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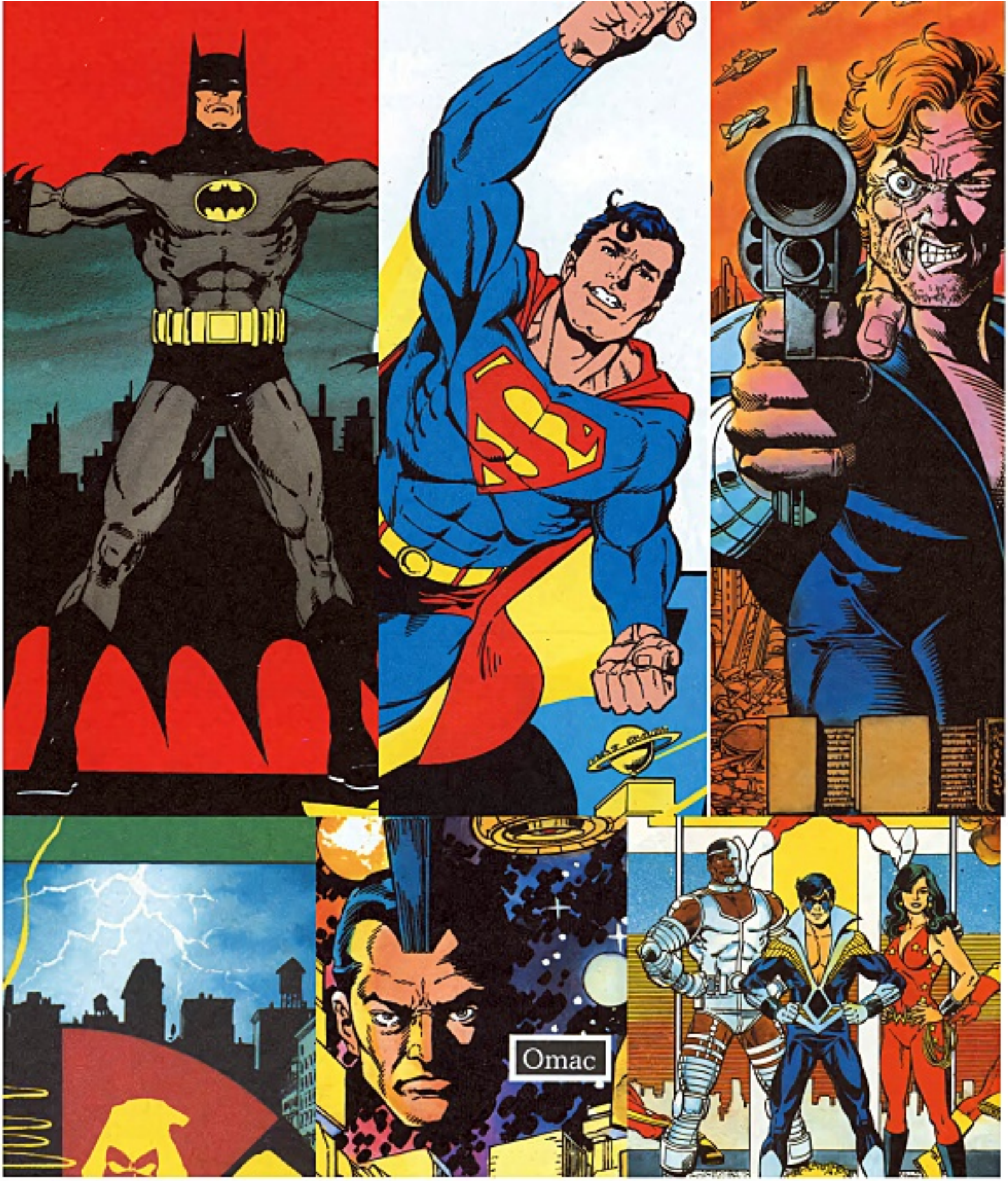

Originally intended as the last two issues of Crisis, History of the DC Universe *enabled Pérez to craft a visual narrative of the new continuity established by the landmark maxi-series.*

CALLING DOWN THE T.H.U.N.D.E.R.

Though his name had become synonymous with success—*Teen Titans* was a top-tier title; *Crisis* would essentially reinvent the DC Universe—not everything Pérez touched in the 1980s turned instantly to gold.

Overcommitment, for example, hampered the artist's work on the Deluxe Comics title *Wally Wood's T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents*.

Deluxe owner David Singer, who'd previously hired Pérez to do a cover for a publication called *Comic Times*, contacted the creator about participating in a relaunch of Wood's late-1960s super-team.

"David was trying to line up as much top-drawer talent as he could," Pérez recalls, "and he offered me an incredibly large amount of money."

While he wasn't an aficionado of the series ("I had read a few of the Wally Wood issues, but I was never a T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents fan. Not because of lack of interest, but because of a lack of opportunity to get the books. I knew about them more from a historical perspective."), Pérez found the prospect of resurrecting the title "interesting," viewing it as a chance to give life to a few new characters—and as an opportunity to pencil yet another team book.

"It was nice to do," he says of the pin-ups, covers and three 10-page stories he penciled for the series, "but I don't think I did my finest work on it."

In fact, he offers, it could be said the look of his stories depended more upon the talents of the inkers involved than his own. Dave Cockrum, originally brought on to ink Pérez's first story, had to finish the tale working from the artist's layouts, and, from that point on, each of the inkers had to work from what Pérez describes as "very loose pencils."

"It was definitely not a high water mark for me," Pérez admits. "I was overcommitted, doing too much work, and I didn't have enough time to give anything close to my best effort on the series, much to my regret, since my wife was actually a character in the book—the belly-dancing assassin Phoenicia."

Carol Flynn's inclusion in the series, though brief (Phoenicia appeared only in *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents* #1 and #2), provided Pérez with a few intriguing—and, in one case, amusingly ironic—experiences.

For starters, another artist—John Workman—did a pin-up of Phoenicia for the book, allowing Pérez to see an entirely different interpretation of his wife.

"The character bore no resemblance to Carol in John's version," he laughs, "because he wouldn't have known I was basing it on someone."

The irony came into play as a result of something called for in the script; at one point in the tale, Phoenicia, an aviatrix as well as an assassin, walks out on a plane's wing in mid-air.

"My wife has vertigo," the artist chuckles.

Pérez, who considers his limited tenure on the title "unfulfilling," acknowledges that, ultimately, he didn't give Wally Wood's heroes the attention they deserved. In a way, *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents* became a victim of the very popularity that brought Pérez to its pages in the first place.

"No matter how much David was paying me, if Marvel or DC was offering something that I was interested in, even though they weren't paying as much, I tended to gravitate towards that," Pérez acknowledges. "David was being treated like a second-class citizen as far as schedules were concerned, which was my fault. He ended up having to accept the fact I would only do so much for him, because I'd always gravitate toward the characters I love."

"I didn't have enough time to give anything close to my best effort on the series, much to my regret, since my wife was actually a character in the book—the belly-dancing assassin Phoenicia."

© John Carbonaro

Overcommitment hampered Pérez throughout the 1980s and contributed to his abbreviated run on Wally Wood's T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents.

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COVER MODELS

By the 1980s, George Pérez had established his credentials as a storytelling "team titan" renowned for drawing group books and action sequences, astoundingly detailed panels and singularly unique characters.

For some, such recognition would be satisfactory, but not Pérez. He saw an area for artistic improvement, arguably the most important image in any comic book—the cover.

"I wanted to get a design sense," he said. "I wanted to be known for doing good covers."

His success in that endeavor is inarguable; Pérez went on to draw some of the most memorable, and oft-imitated, covers in comic history, most notably, the cover to *Crisis* #7. That image, depicting a distraught, tearful Superman carrying the body of his Kryptonian cousin, has inspired covers for titles as disparate as *Mighty Mouse* (Marvel, drawn by Pérez himself), *Valor* (DC) and *Radioactive Man* (Bongo). Pérez has reinterpreted the piece for countless commissions and convention sketches. It even spawned a statue.

His quest to design covers brought him to books such as *Green Lantern* and *Legion*, *JLA* and *Amethyst, Princess of Gemworld*.

"I took on *Amethyst* as a favor to Karen Berger," he says. "It was fun trying fantasy, and I love things with female protagonists. While my style might have been a little too standard and superheroic, [inker] Ernie Colon kept that bit of fairy tale whimsy to it. The combination made for very nice, very different Pérez."

Eventually, demand for a Pérez cover became so great—"either because I was associated with the characters before or just because it would help sales"—that he stepped back from his "cover guy" status.

"After a while, I realized it really was unfair to be drawing covers for books I wasn't penciling," he said. "If the artist is good enough to draw the interior, why shouldn't he draw his own covers? I know *I'd* be offended if that happened to me."

Who's Who In The DC Universe, an encyclopedic reference to the myriad characters of DC Comics, represents Pérez's biggest—and, likely, most intense—experiment with covers. With his self-professed love for drawing large groups, he seemed to be the logical choice as artist—each cover would involve dozens of characters.

It wasn't until he penciled the first *Who's Who* piece, until he unveiled what he called his "interactive montage," that DC realized the full value of Pérez's participation in the project.

"I drew a lot of disparate characters on a page with only the association that their names start with the same letter," he said, "and I still made them interactive."

He united all the characters into one image, emphasizing each issue's "lead characters" in the front, and established a continuing motif. If a character

could stretch, then part of him was on one side of the page, the remaining parts on the other.

"It was such a natural thing to do," he says. "Things like Metamorpho stretching around the cover, having Matter-Eater Lad chewing on his body on the other side of the page.

"Basically, it was the same thing that enabled me to do team books—the ability to just take characters and make them work with each other, make them not appear as if they're just standing there, alone. They are interacting with their surroundings."

Who's Who represented something of a creative milestone for Pérez, as the series crystallized his unique approach to multi-character art.

"The characters react to each other," he says, "even in a pin-up. They don't just pose individually, they act as a group. Even if somebody's ignoring the group, he's reacting to the group by ignoring them."

The *Who's Who* covers, while revolutionary, were incredibly time consuming, and, as Pérez was working concurrently on *Crisis*, he was only able to pencil 11 of the 26 wrap-arounds.

"When I did the first few, I was inking them. Once I gave up the inking, the enthusiasm started to wane, even though I had a great inker in Dick Giordano," he explained. "When it wasn't

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totally me, it wasn't me getting my crack at doing these characters; it was me being filtered by someone else. I started losing interest. I did a few after that, non-sequentially, but eventually other artists—Chuck Patton, John Byrne—filled in.

"I had pretty much burned out on being able to do something like that on a monthly basis."

Pérez flexed a different set of artistic muscles on the covers for "Batman: A Lonely Place of Dying," a project the artist says he couldn't pass up.

"The interior artist [on *Batman*] was a little miffed I got to draw them, but DC wanted me to do it because of my commercial value," Pérez says, "and they intended on releasing the covers as a portfolio."

Keeping their future usage in mind, the penciler took a unique angle to the cover's designs, drawing them with much more linework and, because he knew the portfolio would be reprinted without color, much more texture.

"I drew it for black and white," he said, "Everything was a lot more filled in then, so the artwork would not look empty when they printed it."

Unlike *Who's Who*, "A Lonely Place of Dying" gave the artist the freedom to do "full-throttle" Pérez artwork without the pressure and time constraints of trying to do it on a monthly basis.

"It was fun," he shares. "I could never pencil and ink myself on a monthly assignment, but on a cover, I could. It was the one place I could to something totally on my own.

"If I didn't like the final piece, I had no one to blame but myself."

"A Lonely Place of Dying" gave Pérez the freedom to do "full-throttle" artwork without the pressure and time constraints of trying to do it on a monthly basis. "It was fun," he said. "I could never pencil and ink myself on a monthly assignment, but on a cover, I could. It was the one place I could to something totally on my own."

PLATE THIRTEEN

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"I had nothing to lose if the book didn't succeed...I had to have enough confidence in my abilities to say I think I can make Wonder Woman at least critically successful. People liked my artwork, and I was going to do my best on Wonder Woman."

—George Pérez

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WONDER WOMAN
POTTER, PEREZ AND PATTERSON
THE HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE is must reading

WONDER WOMAN

Superman had all the luck.

Crisis on Infinite Earths was, at least initially, supposed to kill the Man of Steel. The death of such an icon—the death of THE comic book icon—would have gone down in DC history as the greatest of birthday presents: a gift-wrapped, golden opportunity to forge an all-new, continuity-free future for the Man of Tomorrow.

"It would have been incredible, revolutionary," Pérez says. "DC could have begun afresh."

One problem, though—the company hadn't given any thought to *how* they would start Superman anew. They had no immediate plan for the character, and absolutely no intention—none whatsoever—of going several months without any Superman product while they devised one.

And so, Superman lived. He survived the *Crisis on Infinite Earths*.

Wonder Woman did not.

DC allowed *Crisis*' creators to essentially destroy the Amazon Princess, to erase the entirety of her past and return her to the clay from which she was formed, despite the fact they had no blueprint for her return.

"It shows you how Wonder Woman was regarded," the artist says. "She was devolved, knowing they wanted to resurrect her, but having no solid ideas as to how."

Her series, unlike Superman's *Action Comics*, was canceled, a move that might not have mattered one bit to Pérez, if not for John Byrne and Marv Wolfman.

Byrne, an artist with whom—because of the proximity of their professional debuts, their simultaneous rises at Marvel, their co-captaining of revamped super-teams—Pérez had often been compared, signed on to lead Superman into the post-*Crisis* era.

Pérez, in part culpable for the existence of a post-*Crisis*

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era, couldn't allow his colleague to one-up him, to romp unchallenged in the fertile ground that he, himself, had helped sow.

To truly compete, to make his own mark on the new DC, Pérez—who, until then, had been considering a retirement from regular series work—needed an icon. Superman,obviously, was accounted for. Frank Miller and David Mazzuchelli claimed Batman.

Enter Wolfman. The writer had been urging Pérez to try his hand at writing since their days on *Titans*: "George was such a good storyteller, why not?"

Pérez may not have heeded his friend's urgings at the time, but—perhaps looking to the future—he did unearth a germ of a story in an early arc of *Teen Titans*, culling an idea from two-parter that sent the team to Paradise Island, an arc that furnished the artist with his first chance to depict the gods and goddesses of Greek mythology.

"I wanted to do a challenge of the gods-type thing," Pérez says, "a particular type of story, inspired by my love for Ray Harryhausen movies, where the hero goes through a gauntlet of mythological adventures in order to reach a particular goal."

Fortunately, DC had the perfect hero—the perfect icon—for such a tale: Wonder Woman.

Unfortunately, his work on *Crisis* had erased Wonder Woman from the company's universe. He had unintentionally rendered his own idea moot. It looked as if Byrne's path to victory in their undeclared battle remained clear.

Looks, however, can—and did—prove deceiving.

Around the time Byrne's *Man of Steel* premiered, DC began discussing a new Wonder Woman series. Pérez met with *Wonder Woman* editor Janice Race, and, according to him, she "was not happy." The office was under a time crunch. They had to launch a new *Wonder Woman* series, and, though they weren't pleased with the direction, they were committed to putting it out—they had no other option.

"They didn't like the way the story was going to go; they didn't like the artist involved," Pérez recounts. "They were just going to put it out there, settle for what they could get."

Barbara Kesel, then a DC editor, remembers she "strongly disliked" incoming writer Greg Potter's take on the character.

"His Wonder Woman was a nasty uber-bitch, rather than a hero," Kesel says. "To me, it was an embarrassing version of the character."

Potter's plot had been rewritten several times in an effort to tone down elements some felt were misogynistic, but the revisions, though more tolerable, were still far from satisfactory. Pérez observed the apprehension among the staff and realized *Wonder Woman* was a book "no one had any hope for."

He found his challenge.

"I asked Janice if I could come in and draw the first six issues," he recalls. "It was my first kiss from an editor."

"I wanted to do...a particular type of story, inspired by my love for Ray Harryhausen movies, where the hero goes through a gauntlet of mythological adventures in order to reach a particular goal."

—George Pérez, on "Challenge of the Gods"

EXTRA
WONDER WOMAN
GEORGE PÉREZ and BOB Mc LEOD
WHO KILLED MYNDI MAYER?
MURDERED 'STAR PUBLICIST' HAD MANY ENEMIES
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TUESDAY 'BOARD MEETING MASSACRE' NUTS MANN SUSPECT—Story on page 2
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50
DOUBLE-SIZED 50TH ISSUE!
BY GEORGE PÉREZ, JILL THOMPSON AND ROMEO TANGHAL
WITH
SERGIO ARAGONÉS
BRIAN BOLLAND
ADAM HUGHES
LAURA MEDLEY
ALEX NOWLAN
CRAIG RUSSELL
MARIE SEVERIN
MARK WAGNER

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The artist's only proviso was that he be given a chance to speak with Potter, to try to reconcile their differing conceptions for the series.

"I wanted Wonder Woman to be a distaff variation on Thor," he says, where mythology is a big, big part of the story, but with a female protagonist.

"I wanted to keep as much of [WW creator] William Moulton Marsden's stuff in there as I could."

In recognition of the detailed, time-consuming nature of Pérez's art, the editorial office gave him an unheard of ten-month lead time on the series, great portions of which he devoted to research.

"I knew full well that I had nothing to lose if the book didn't succeed, but I would have a lot to gain if it did," he said. "I had to have enough confidence in my own abilities to say I think I can make *Wonder Woman* at least critically successful. I couldn't guarantee sales, but I thought I could make it critically acceptable. People liked my artwork, and I was going to do my best on *Wonder Woman*."

It was, he felt, what the character deserved.

"I saw this as a chance to give proper chops to one of the top three characters that DC had. Superman was already going through a resurgence, thanks to John, and Frank Miller and David Mazzuchelli had done similar stuff with Batman. Wonder Woman gave me the opportunity to see if we could do a three-for-three.

"I wanted to do for Wonder Woman what the other guys had done. I couldn't hope to equal the success of either of them—*Superman* was such a phenomenal success and *Dark Knight* became such a pivotal book in the Batman mythology—I just wanted to see what I could do with the character. My expectations weren't as high. I just wanted to clean her up a bit and concentrate on the thing that made her unique."

Wonder Woman, he said, is not Supergirl. She's not a superhero, she's a fantasy character who gets involved with super-heroes.

"I asked them to let me play with that, using my love for the Ray Harryhausen movies and my interest in mythology kindled by the *Titans* story on Paradise Island," he explains. "I knew the basics of Wonder Woman and I wanted to play. Just for six issues, that would be fine."

Pérez's playtime paid dividends. Fans liked his take on the character, and the series garnered positive critical

Pérez's efforts to return Wonder Woman to glory were, to say the least, well-received. The job he did was so exemplary, in fact, the cover to issue #22 (below, left) was featured on a 2006 United States postage stamp.

ANNUAL
WONDER WOMAN
by GEORGE PÉREZ · ART ADAMS · ROSS ANDRU · BRIAN BOLLAND
JOHN BOLTON · JOSÉ LUIS GARCÍA-LÓPEZ · CURT SWAN
EXTRA FEATURE!
PARADISE LOST

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"Chalk Drawings," which appeared in Wonder Woman *#46, dealt with teenage suicide. Artist Jill Thompson and writer Mindy Newell collaborated with Pérez on the issue, one of his favorites.*

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and commercial reactions. "It sold well," he said, "the best it'd sold in two decades."

For the first time in a long while, *Wonder Woman* was a contender.

Potter left the series after the second issue—"Greg and I were going in different directions," the artist recounts—and with issue #3, *Wonder Woman* became the canvas for Pérez's imagination. His vision shaped the Amazon Princess' new life.

"I started from scratch," said the series' new writer/artist. "Wonder Woman wasn't in existence between *Crisis* and my first issue, so when I did *Wonder Woman* it wasn't technically a reboot, it was a natural follow up to the *Crisis*."

Writer Len Wein, for whom Pérez had penciled several projects, including *Fantastic Four*, signed on to dialogue the series.

"George brought the same dedication, enthusiasm and tremendous input to his writing that he did to his art," he says. "He was a writer the way he was an artist, and that's not necessarily a pejorative. One of the symbols of George's work is that there's a lot of stuff in it. There's a lot of lines, things in the background. There's a lot going on.

WONDER WOMAN
WONDER WOMAN
46
suicide (sŏŏ-ĭ-sīd), n 1. The act of taking one's own life. 2. a person who commits suicide.
BY GEORGE PEREZ, MINDY NEWELL, JILL THOMPSON & ROMEO TANGHAL

© DC Comics

Wonder Woman #46

"That was what his writing was like. When he gave me the plots I was working from, he had done a considerable amount of research into the myths that we were working from. I would get stuff from him with copious notes about this aspect of history and that aspect of the myth."

Pérez provided Wein with so much background information, in fact, the scripter found it impossible to work it all into the story.

"I would leave out about half to two-thirds of what he had given me," Wein says.

DC only contracted Pérez's services for a year, but since he was in the middle of a story when issue #12 rolled around, he stayed on board—a process he'd repeat for the next three years.

Pérez took over the dialoguing duties in issue #17 ("From then on, it was my interpretation of the character, going for broke"), and he relinquished his artistic responsibilities on the title at the end of its second year.

"Two years was about as long as I could maintain penciling a book I was writing as well, so I ended up dropping the drawing," he says. "Despite the best efforts of some artists, the book was never quite the same. I think what made the first 24 issues unique was that they were one man's vision. It was me. The way Diana looked and acted visually, it was totally linked to how she spoke and thought."

Pérez did do the "Challenge of the Gods" storyline in the course of the series (issues #11-14) and remained on the series for half a decade, staying on board as the writer until 1992.

"To this day, it's fondly remembered," he admits. "When I finally announced I was leaving the series after five years as writer and two years as an artist, I met a lot of women who said they were big fans of Wonder Woman.

"So many gorgeous women," he laughs. "If I had known that was the fan base, I'd probably still be on the book!"

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TITANS: GAMES, AND A TARNISHING GOLDEN BOY

Financially, *Wonder Woman* was a win-win situation for Pérez. Thanks to what he calls a "very cushy contract" from DC, he stood to bank a royalty check no matter how the book sold. If it didn't sell at all, he was guaranteed a certain amount of money. If it sold, he did even better.

The book sold.

Even so, the storyteller said the *Wonder Woman* job wasn't profitable enough to serve as his sole source of income. *Titans*, on the other hand, was still doing very well, and, thanks in part to his success on the title earlier in the decade, the series had a royalty system unmatched at DC.

In other words, Pérez could earn more money on *Titans* for doing less work than he did on *Wonder Woman*—with a lot less pressure. Doing double-duty on a series was tough, even confining; and in an effort to increase his professional variety, as well as his paycheck, Pérez stepped down as penciler on *Wonder Woman* and rejoined his old partner Wolfman on the book that made them famous.

Though he'd been gone almost four years, it didn't take Pérez long to get back into the swing of things, to recall why it was he loved the Titans. He'd co-created the characters, grown them up and grown up with them, given them their personalities, their behaviors, even their faces.

"It was like a family reunion," he said.

Drawing the characters was second nature for him, a natural occurrence, an encouraging sign that some things—such as the Titans themselves—don't have to change.

The situation behind the panels wasn't quite so immutable, though. The second Wolfman-Pérez run on *Titans*, while incredibly successful, could hardly be mistaken as a another instance of catching lightning in a bottle.

Wolfman was no longer at his finest—"It was a bad time for me," he says. "I was in a writer's block. I wasn't doing great work at the time"—whereas Pérez, his confidence as a writer bolstered by his success on *Wonder Woman*, had become more assertive as a co-plotter.

"Recapturing the magic?" Wolfman says. "Not in the slightest."

The Titans creators started what would become their first new storyarc, "Who Is Wonder Girl?", prior to Pérez's return. The story, which appeared in *The New Titans* #50-54 and revamped Donna Troy's origin in the post-*Crisis* era, was originally conceived as a Titans graphic novel.

"I'd done more than half of it by that point," Pérez says, "and Marv and I realized the story had a time limit. Rather than do a Titans story in issue 50 and continue on while trying to do the graphic novel, we decided to take those pages and turn them into *The New Titans* issues.

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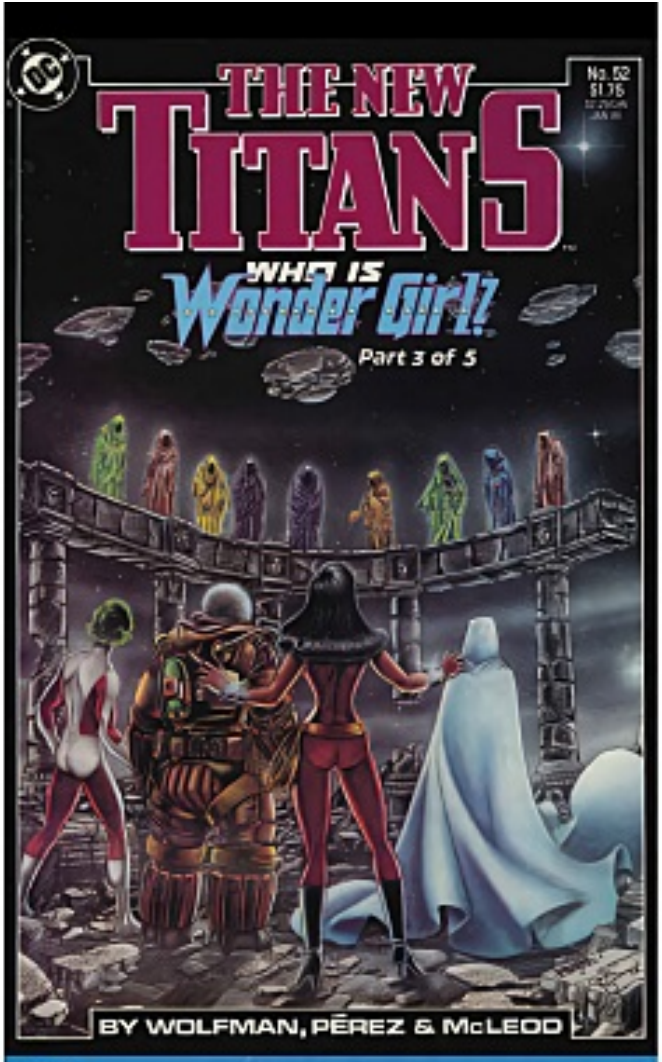

"Otherwise, we'd constantly have Donna in limbo; we'd be unable to do anything with her until we explained her past in the 'Who Is Wonder Girl?' story."

Wolfman remembers the decision—the story as a whole—with dissatisfaction: "Looking back, I would never have done a new origin for Wonder Girl."

That sense of disappointment would grow as the duo proceeded onto a new Titans graphic novel, *Games*.

Wolfman, Pérez and then-editor Barbara Kesel got together to brainstorm ideas for the project, hoping to work out a story that was, as Pérez says, "a little less stuck in time [than 'Wonder Girl']."

"We thought we'd get the book done and get it out," he explains, "never thinking the characters would be dated."

But Pérez, DC's golden boy, kept taking on additional assignments.

"I was doing the graphic novel, I was still doing *Titans* and *Wonder Woman*, and…I was very hot, and I just couldn't say no," he says. "DC knew I was supposed to be working on *Games*, but they kept offering me other work, and I kept saying yes."

As a result, the graphic novel kept getting pushed back on the schedule, postponed again and again, until well after Pérez's second stay on the series ended.

"Eventually, DC wanted to progress the characters in *Titans* and couldn't get hung up by the graphic novel," he says. "The *Titans* book was progressing to a point where if they [the series' creative team] wanted to do anything with Jericho, it wasn't going to match what we had with the graphic novel. Ditto, with the other characters.

"Ultimately, I just started losing interest."

By that time, it had been almost ten years since the original *JLA/Avengers* comic had fallen apart, and Pérez had convinced himself his dream project would never come to pass. That, combined with the lingering death of *Games*, dampened the artist's spirit.

He began making what he calls "poor choices," and—as he did at the end of the 1970s—fell into a rut of unreliability.

"I was beginning not to finish projects that I'd started," he explained, "not letting them be what they should have been. I reached a point where I could no longer be trusted to handle a major project.

"The 1980s were the beginning and the end of my superstardom."

The "Who is Wonder Girl?" storyline, which ran for five issues in The New Titans, *was originally conceived as a Titans graphic novel.*

IV

THE REPORTS OF MY DEMISE

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Money isn't everything.

It's not an easy thing to admit; it's an even harder thing to learn.

For as long as he could remember, George Pérez had been passionate about comics. Their panel borders, protracted plotlines and action-packed pages were as familiar to him as his own smile.

In comics, he found respite; they were the playground for his fertile imagination, his artistry. He made comics books, made them well, and doing so gave him tremendous pleasure. Comic books were his livelihood. They were his passion. The industry was his home.

At the onset of the 1990s, though, home wasn't necessarily a satisfying place to be. The country's passion for comics was, from one vantage point, at its highest, but a man—a fan—like Pérez knew, deep down, the prevailing feeling to be superficial, a fleeting infatuation, rather than a lifelong love.

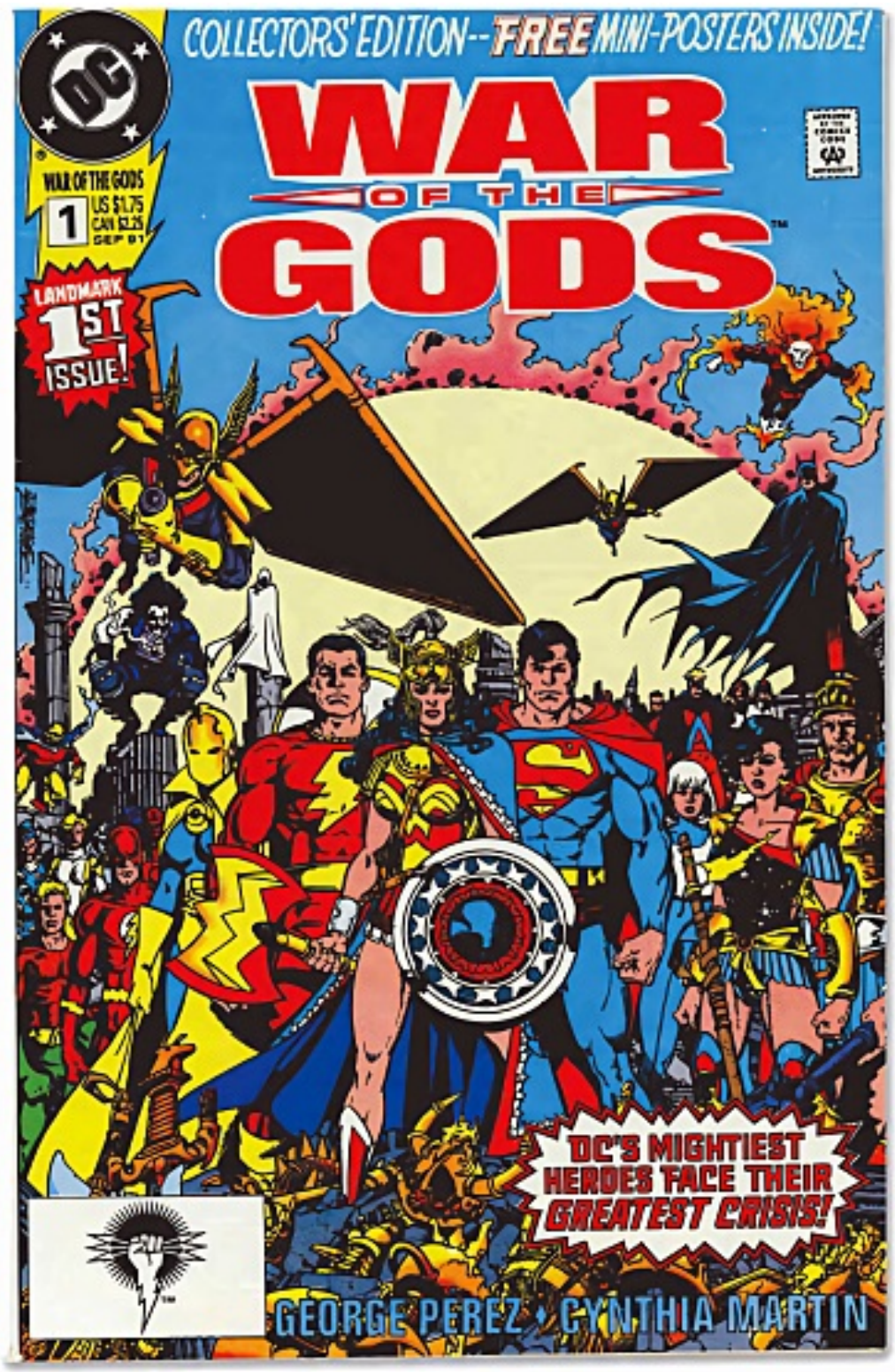
An explosion—one both figurative and economically literal—rocked the comic world at the decade's start. The trend-setters of pop culture, once again taking note of the likes of Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman, zeroed in on comic books and declared them a commodity.

With the type of frenzied swarming usually reserved for the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, scores of speculators swept through comic shops and sci-fi conventions, a fleet of treasure-hungry pirates looking to plunder the riches they believed their comic collections would one day bestow.

The buying and selling of funny-books became more of a hobby than the comics themselves, an obsessive adult's game built around concepts such as "limited editions," "pristine condition" and "return on investment."

The great majority of the investors never even considered reading the comics they'd purchased, paralyzed by the fear that breaking the sacred seal of the Scotch tape or—heaven forbid—actually cracking open a book would drop it from "Mint" to "Near Mint" condition, a depreciation that would—in their minds, at least—differentiate whether they could sell it to buy a beach house in the Hamptons or a bungalow on the Jersey shore.

Far too rarely did people speak of storytelling or the value of sequential art; they overlooked comics as one of America's three original contributions to world



Pérez intended War of the Gods, *once titled* The Holy Wars, *as the centerpiece of Wonder Woman's 50th birthday celebration, a mythological epic that would have spread through the company's titles.*

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culture, preferring instead to view the multicolored pamphlets as a means to a quick buck.

The malaise wasn't confined solely to speculators, either. Dollar signs sparkled in the eyes of the men and women behind the panels, as well. No longer just big fish in a small pond, comic creators became hot properties, appearing in television commercials and earning inclusion on the covers of national magazines. Popular comic talents made good money—big money—enough to purchase homes, start companies and buy top-of-the-line sportscars.

Like it or not, the focus of comics—even for those within comics—shifted from storytelling to stock options, from fun to business. Creators disregarded deadlines, companies solicited books they never released. The bottom line suddenly meant more to everyone than well-crafted lines; sales figures impressed to a far greater degree than anatomically sound, well-rendered figures. Comics were hot, but largely hollow.

Lost in the shuffle were the fans, the ones who truly felt for the characters, those who loved and idolized comic creators for their talent, rather than their money. They'd been with comics for years, and, in exchange for their loyalty, they were largely ignored. They felt disregarded, disappointed and discouraged.

Pérez knew the feeling. He'd ended the 1980s—a decade in which he'd established himself as one of the industry's best—on a definite down note; his standing in the community had again begun to slip, his superstar status dimmed. He still bore a passion for comics, but it no longer seemed to burn as intensely as it had in times past, and he didn't know why.

"Part of it might have been burnout," he says. "I couldn't finish projects. The Titans graphic novel wasn't finished; JLA/Avengers from almost a decade earlier was also killed. I was becoming a little disillusioned.

"From being the wunderkind who produced the big classics, I was becoming the Orson Welles of comics. They couldn't deny my ability, they couldn't deny my genius, if you will, but they also couldn't rely on me getting a project out."

As fate would have it, the onset of Pérez's frustration coincided with Wonder Woman's golden anniversary, for which the increasingly unreliable creator had agreed to do—of all things—a massive intra-company crossover. Such occurrences had become the norm at DC. "Another unfortunate side-effect of *Crisis*," Pérez called it.

He intended *War of the Gods*, originally titled *The Holy Wars*, as the centerpiece of Wonder Woman's 50th birthday celebration, a mythological epic that would have spread through the company's titles, linked together by a *War of the Gods* mini-series.

"It was supposed to be DC's big crossover," Pérez said.

Apparently, the gods of fortune were none too fond of *War*.

Sundry circumstances—starting with DC's decision *not* to deem it an anniversary project—converged to make the experience a grueling one for Pérez, who's since admitted he should have realized the crossover was cursed from the start.

He'd composed a comprehensive overview of the project, putting together detailed breakdowns explaining how the story should play out in each of the company's series. Pérez says the initial project proposal sat unread in DC's offices for months, and, for reasons beyond his ken, the editors never sent the breakdowns to the appropriate creative teams.

War, essentially, was a line-encompassing crossover of which no one had ever heard.

"*I* had to tell Marv Wolfman about it," Pérez explains. "And that was only a few months before I was supposed to start the first issue."

DC made things worse by tinkering with the series' release schedule. In an effort to avoid continuity conflicts with John Byrne's planned *Captain Marvel* series—Byrne and Pérez had envisioned their respective projects with different versions of the hero—DC pushed back the release of *War*, presumably to give Pérez a chance to incorporate any new character elements introduced by his colleague.

Problems finding an artist for the mini-series subsequently arose (Pérez had only planned on doing layouts), as did issues concerning the status of characters essential to the series, namely, *Titans*' Donna Troy.

Troy was a major element of *War*, something Pérez said he made clear in his original synopsis, the synopsis Wolfman hadn't seen.

"It put Marv in a tough spot; he was in the midst of a complicated [*Titans*] story," the storyteller said. "He did the best he could."

As Pérez wrangled with those matters, word came down that Byrne's *Captain Marvel* wouldn't see print, after all. The potential continuity conflicts averted, DC moved *War* forward in the publishing schedule again, increasing the pressure on Pérez, who was already at least a month behind.

Apathy overwhelmed the artist; he considered *War* an encumbrance—a job, rather than a labor of love—and that impassivity further sapped his ardor.

Then, in a move that astounded and infuriated Pérez, DC announced *Armageddon 2001* would serve as its annual crossover, robbing *War* of its notability and reducing it to nothing more than a mini-series with a female lead—a decidedly difficult sell, even in a bull market.

When Pérez lost editor Karen Berger to maternity leave, the Wonder Woman line—both the regular series, which its writer admitted was "starting to flounder," and the *War of the Gods* project—lost its voice.

"That's when I realized that, if it wasn't for Karen, very few people were championing *Wonder Woman*," he said. "Very few people wanted to entrust a crossover

book with Wonder Woman as the linchpin."

Things at DC weren't going nearly as well as Pérez had wanted—he deliberated abandoning *War*, only to find he was contractually bound to complete it—so when creator Jim Starlin called to offer him the opportunity to pencil *The Infinity Gauntlet* for Marvel, the artist pounced on it: "I thought, 'Oh, good. At least I'll get to draw the Marvel characters again.'"

The six-issue mini-series represented the artist's first interior penciled work for the House of Ideas in more than a decade (he previously inked a *Guardians of the Galaxy* cover and penciled and inked a *Mighty Mouse* cover), and, in terms of its purview, it represented a rather fitting "Welcome back."

In the story, the mad god Thanos, raised to omniscience by the wondrous Infinity Gauntlet, attempts to win the affections of his mistress, Death, by eradicating half the living things in the Marvel Universe. Adam Warlock, Doctor Strange, the Silver Surfer, the Avengers, the X-Men, Spider-Man and the Fantastic Four (Pérez asked Starlin to up the character count, citing a desire to make his return to Marvel something that would "knock fans' socks off") assemble in a heroic, life-affirming army and head into space to battle Thanos.

Though the premise seemed tailored for his particular artistic preferences, Pérez's feel for the project inevitably soured.

"There were certain expectations I had on that book that weren't being met," he explained. "The biggest problem was that, after the heroes went into outer space, there was no chance of drawing any more characters."

"The Infinity Gauntlet was a story that I thought could have been done in half the space. It seemed like a lot of padding: characters fighting, talking, getting defeated, standing up; fighting, talking, getting defeated and so on."

In addition, Pérez was under the impression *The Infinity Gauntlet* was intended as the final chapter in Starlin's long-running Thanos story. When he found out a sequel was in the works, the project—its magnitude greatly diminished in his mind—lost some of its luster.

Inwardly, Pérez began to criticize Starlin's story; in part, he says, because he was no longer used to working solely as an artist and, in part, because of the added stress of simultaneously working on the ill-fated *War of the Gods*. The biggest criticism he levied dealt with the length of the tale—Pérez felt the six, double-sized books were simply too expansive.

"*The Infinity Gauntlet* was a story that I thought could have been done in half the space," he said. "It seemed like a lot of padding: characters fighting, talking, getting defeated, standing up; fighting, talking, getting defeated and so on.

"It was a vicious cycle, and I lost interest."

With the interest went the enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm took with it any impetus for doing the work. Eventually, his productivity slowed to the point Marvel had to draft artist Ron Lim as a replacement.

"Initially, they were only going to replace me for half a book," George said, "but I opted to let them finish the series with the other artist."

Just like that, another "incomplete" appeared on Pérez's resume, another disappointment tugged at his soul.

Though he earned "a ton of money" for his work on the mini-series, the artist's decision to leave *Infinity Gauntlet* exacerbated his sense

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Impressed by one of author Peter David's Star Trek novels, Pérez's wife (Carol Flynn) suggested he and David should work together, if possible. The result? Future Imperfect, one of the most highly regarded tales in the Hulk canon.

of professional vexation, a feeling further aggravated by his habit of overcommitting. He had only just ended an exclusive relationship with DC, and, as the offers poured in, Pérez once again found himself unable to say no. He'd been penciling *Infinity Gauntlet*, writing *Wonder Woman*, drawing pin-ups for various comics and overseeing *War of the Gods*, all at the same time, and when projects were getting done—*if* they were getting done—they weren't up to Pérez's personal standards. He overworked himself, and the burden weighing upon his mind, his hand and his spirit all but destroyed *War of the Gods*.

"It was faring so badly," he said. "It had fallen so far behind that follow-up chapters were seeing print before the chapters that preceded them."

The project did see completion, but Pérez's grand plans for Wonder Woman's anniversary went for naught. He was unhappy with DC for the way they handled the character and, throughout the *War of the Gods* debacle, their treatment of him. After all, he'd been with the company for 12 years and had a hand in some of its most spectacular successes of that era. He was named one of the "50 Who Made DC Great," but his continued contributions were, he felt, largely unappreciated.

Pérez had played a pivotal role in recreating DC's universe, in reinvigorating its fortune and reshaping its future—his talent and desire had helped DC restore its good name—yet when he stepped away from the company toward the end of 1991, he did so with a bad taste in his mouth. George's passion withdrew even further.

"*War of the Gods*," he says unequivocally, "was a failure."

Around that time, Carol Flynn (Pérez's wife) finished a science-fiction novel she'd been reading, a book set in the Star Trek Universe. Having enjoyed the story, Flynn took note of the author's name, and upon discovering the writer, Peter David, also worked in comics, she played matchmaker.

Sort of.

"If you ever get a chance to work with Peter," Flynn told her husband. "You should give it a try. It might be cool."

Pérez contacted David, then the scribe for *The Incredible Hulk*, and asked to be kept in mind if he ever found himself in need of an artist. As Pérez tells it, David called his editor at Marvel, Bobbie Chase, immediately. The writer had pitched a two-part graphic novel called *The Incredible Hulk: Future Imperfect*, and both artists previously attached to the series—Sam Kieth and Dale Keown—had bowed out. Pérez would be perfect for the job—his name would draw more attention to the project, and his skill was virtually unmatched.

The phone rang not long after.

"They offered me *Future Imperfect*," the artist said. "From my first phone call to Peter to having a full team on the graphic novel was probably only a matter of hours.

"*Future Imperfect* was greenlit, and it all started with my wife."

Pérez, who penciled and inked the graphic novel, brought David's radiation-ravaged, dystopian future to life, populating the claustrophobic environment with a mind-numbing assortment of faces, details and—once the Hulk starts smashing—debris.

His art captured the palpable power in the slugfests between the Hulk and the villainous Maestro, titanic tussles packed with equal parts ferocity and desperation. His polished linework froze the eyes with a dramatic flair—most evident, perhaps, in the scene involving Rick Jones' hall of heroes, a room filled with relics of the superheroic past.

David's script called for Pérez to include the Silver Surfer's surfboard, Captain America's shield, Wolverine's skeleton and a shelf full of jars containing the ashes of the Hulk's friends and allies. Beyond those, Pérez was free to satisfy his own whims, to draw whatever relics crossed his mind.

The artist held nothing back. He added the helmets of Magneto, Ant-Man and Nova, a wall of Tony Stark's Iron Man armor and Professor X's wheelchair. The Black Knight's sword, the Beast's blue pelt and the heads of the Vision, Warlock and Ultron found homes in the collection. Thor's hammer

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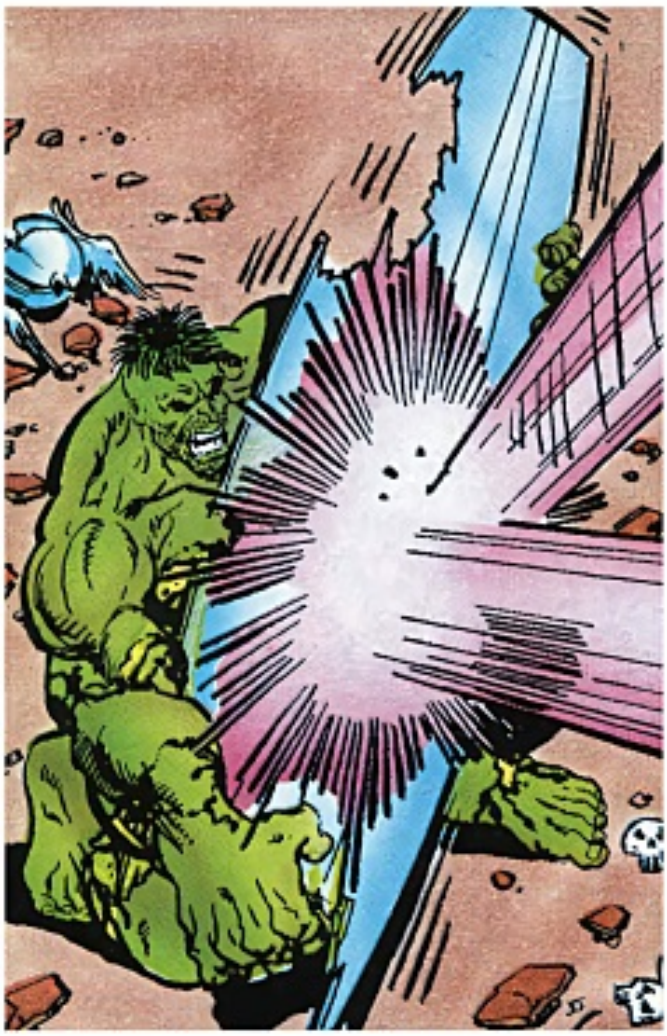

Pérez's depiction of Rick Jones' hall of heroes, a room filled with relics of the superheroic past, includes—among other things—the helmets of Magneto, Ant-Man and Nova; Iron Man's armor, Professor X's wheelchair, Ghost Rider's motorcycle, Batman's batarangs and the Bottle City of Kandor.

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appears, as do Cyclops' visor and Quasar's cape, Ghost Rider's motorcycle and the tentacles of Doctor Octopus.

Pérez also included several non-Marvel relics—Batman's batarangs and the Bottle City of Kandor.

"That was a lot of fun," he says. "And the fans loved it."

Yet for all his enjoyment, the difficulties plaguing Pérez's recent works—declining self-interest, decreased speed—struck *Future Imperfect* as well.

"I almost didn't complete the series," he admits.

He'd fallen so far off the deadline pace Chase had to deliver an ultimatum: "Finish soon, or the story can't be printed."

The artist had done too much work, David had shown too much faith in him, to stop now. Pérez dug down deep and found the inspiration he needed. The artist pushed himself to the point of unconsciousness, slaving away at his drawing board for 72 hours straight to ensure the book met its deadline.

"The next morning, my wife found me slumped on the lounge chair and couldn't wake me," he remembered. "I'm usually a light sleeper, so she was afraid something had happened to me. She thought I might have had a heart attack, but I'd just fallen asleep out of exhaustion."

At the time, Pérez could have had no idea of the degree to which fans would forever appreciate his three-day artistic marathon. *Future Imperfect* ranks among the most highly regarded stories in the Hulk canon and shines as one of the crown jewels of David's long run on the series.

Even so, the artist's memories of the graphic novel remain tainted by the fact he *needed* to draw for 72 hours to complete it, his voice conveying a hint of the relief he must have felt when he finally crashed at his drawing board.

"At least I finished the project," he sighs.

The continued inability to fulfill obligations, the inability to sustain any sense of enthusiasm, gnawed at Pérez. He knew he could do better than he had been doing; he knew he was better than he had been. He needed to find a cure.

Perhaps he merely needed to try something new, unearth a project that could absorb his attention, a job in which he had both a clearly defined role and a definite stake. Maybe such a project, if it existed, would solve his problems.

That in mind, Pérez reunited with David once more, this time on a creator-owned series for Epic's Heavy Hitters line called *Sachs & Violens*. The adult-oriented adventure drew its name from characters J.J. Sachs, a Latina model with a passion for leather corsets and stiletto heels, and Ernie "Violens" Schulz, a Vietnam vet-turned-girlie magazine photographer, a pair of unlikely anti-heroes tied up in the trappings of the sexual underworld.

© Double Trouble Productions

Though the project, like *Future Imperfect*, had formerly been handled by another artist—in the case of *Sachs*, Lee Weeks—Pérez made it his own, a task for which he was eminently qualified.

The artist has a long-standing interest in the fetish world and has both written and directed superheroine-themed wrestling fetish videos for a company called Double Trouble Productions.

"It's the one thing you didn't know about George Pérez," he says.

While directing short films is a totally different discipline, the artist explains that it, too, is an exercise in storytelling, similar to comics in some ways, totally different in others.

"In comics, I work in a very solitary environment," he says. "When I'm directing, I'm hanging around bondage models, dancers and the like. In fact, some of the fetish models I've worked with were actually comics fans who had appreciated my work on *Sachs & Violens*.

"There's no real downside to it," he laughs. "It can be fun. I try to keep it R-rated, at most, never any frontal nudity beyond some toplessness—a superheroine without her costume is just a naked lady."

Pérez's experience in the field added a little something extra to the pages of *Sachs & Violens*; his artwork, steeped in sultry enthusiasm, pulses with a visceral energy. Pérez's lines never looked sexier.

"I had a good time working on *Sachs & Violens*—the subject matter really excited me—but I was still suffering from a bad case of the 'I-just-wasn't-completing-my-jobs,'" he explains. "I was dissatisfied with the stuff I was doing when I had to work on deadline. People would say, 'Oh, this looks gorgeous,' but—because of the amount of time it takes to do the artwork to my satisfaction—it would take me three or four times as long to do it by the time the second, third or fourth issue rolled around."

Pérez fell behind again, and again, the work suffered.

"I penciled and inked the first two issues and barely got out the last two," he says, once more attributing the delay—and his inability to ink issues #3 and #4—to self-dissatisfaction. "The book actually had momentum. It was one of the best-selling and most well-received titles of the Heavy Hitters line, one of the few Heavy Hitters books that was doing well.

"If it hadn't been for my falling behind, the momentum would have inspired a second series. People were interested in more, it had enough of a following to warrant more, and I killed it by allowing there to be such a long stretch of time between the last two issues."

Sachs & Violens *enabled Pérez to reconcile his long-standing interest in the fetish world with his lifelong love of comics.*

© Peter David and George Pérez

© Peter David and George Pérez

Part of the frustration, he says, came from the idea he could not draw the type of book he wanted to draw on a tight schedule.

"Unless they gave me a year and I didn't eat up half of it just playing, I couldn't get the book done to my satisfaction. I was becoming more annoyed with my work."

He found some small gratification contributing to Topps' *Jurassic Park* series, both because it afforded him a chance to work with Gil Kane—"one of the all-time greats"—and because his assignment entailed nothing more involved than inking Kane's pencils.

"Gil was doing all the work," he says. "What I did was just craft."

Mere "craft" wasn't enough, though. Pérez needed to tell stories, he needed to create, but he'd begun to have doubts about his capacity to do so. The disenchantment born of his abortion of *Games* and *Infinity Gauntlet*, his "failure" on *War of the Gods* and his near-misses with *Future Imperfect* and *Sachs & Violens* ate away at his confidence, caused him to question himself, his dedication and his ability.

Pérez's once-boundless passion had, it seemed, been buried alive.

Call it a mid-life—or rather, a mid-career—crisis. The comics world had become almost unrecognizable; everything Pérez knew, everything he'd grown up with, had changed. Superman died, Image Comics owned the title of "hottest publisher," and issue sales were going through the roof. Collectors and speculators created a market that was insatiable. Contracts, exclusive and otherwise, became the norm, and lawyers and literary agents were commonplace.

In an effort to stay current, or at least to make the deal-making part of "the new comics" easier, Pérez hired lawyer Harris Miller as his agent.

After *Jurassic Park* wrapped, Miller approached Pérez about working with Malibu, a publisher whose owners sought to launch an entire line of books that were, as Pérez recalls, "very much creator-friendly, one where all the characters were created by writers and artists, as opposed to a committee."

"They were offering a very, very generous page rate, much better than I was getting at Marvel or DC," he explains. "It was one of those times I let my decisions be tempered, if not by avarice, then by the desire for more profits."

He signed with Malibu, thinking maybe—just maybe—the thrill of a new beginning might stimulate him, that the freshness of a new company's characters could counteract his creative slump.

After penciling a wraparound cover for *Genesis* #0, Pérez poured his talents into issues #1 and #2 of *Break-Thru*, the company's first crossover, penciling 72 pages on which he rendered every character in the Malibu Universe.

Pleased with the results—he claims *Break-Thru* proved he could do his best work and still earn a sufficient wage—Pérez then volunteered for *UltraForce*, Malibu's answer to the Avengers and the JLA. Of all the disparate Malibu titles, Pérez figured that—as a team book—it best played to his tastes and talents.

The artist produced two special UltraForce previews (inserts for *Wizard* magazine) without "any difficulty whatsoever," a statement he wouldn't be able to apply to the first issue of the regular series.

The schedule for *UltraForce* #1 conflicted with

already-existing plans for a vacation, something Pérez hadn't had "in ages."

"It was bad timing," he said. "Very bad timing."

Malibu quickly developed a contingency plan, and in the end, the debut issue of *UltraForce* featured layouts by Pérez with finishes by artist Jerry Bingham.

"I didn't even do the full pencils on my very first issue of *my* team book," Pérez says. "That didn't bode well."

His dire prediction had teeth. It didn't take long for the storyteller to tire of *UltraForce*; whenever he set his mind to penciling the series' characters, he couldn't avoid drawing comparisons—largely unfavorable ones—between the Malibu characters and the classic heroes around whom he'd built his career.

"Even through there were subtle differences, Prototype was a man in armor. He was Iron Man," Pérez says. "I started asking myself, 'Why am I not drawing Iron Man? Why am I not drawing Superman?'

"Why draw the cheap copy when you can draw the original?"

Though he "tried to do good work" for Malibu, Pérez simply wasn't happy. Money couldn't supply him the inspiration he needed. As a result, his productivity dropped, which—in turn—negated whatever financial windfall Malibu could have provided. In the long run, the artist suggests his inflated page rate proved immaterial, as he was working too slowly for the increased scale to have any cumulative effect. "What good is making four times your page rate," he asks, "if you're only drawing one-fourth as many pages?"

Further complicating matters, Pérez regularly missed issues and didn't always finish his own layouts, hardly an ideal situation for either party.

"I was falling behind schedule...always late," the artist said, his voice heavy with remembered disappointment. "I was continuing what happened at the tail end of *Wonder Woman*."

Despite that, he agreed to a deal with another new player in the market, Tekno Comics, a company that had launched a year or so earlier, based on the talents of people who, to hear Pérez tell it, "weren't really associated with comics."

"They were major names like Leonard Nimoy and Mickey Spillane, but, even though Spillane had some history in comics, neither of them were actually doing comics," he explains. "Isaac Asimov was involved, and Isaac was dead.

"They were using names as come-ons to get people's attention, not to produce good comics."

By the time he joined Tekno (to pencil Asimov's *I-Bots*), the company's management professed to have

The quality of Pérez's Malibu Comics art belied his lack of interest in the company's heroes. "I was not happy," he said. "I missed the Marvel and DC characters."

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learned its lesson. Their hiring department finally started to target people familiar with the art of producing comics, rather than simply buying the right to recognizable names.

Too little, too late. The boom had started to fade, and considering Tekno's exorbitant overhead—"My deal there was even better than at Malibu," Pérez reveals—the company's days were numbered.

"It's unfortunate," Pérez says. "I really started to do some kick-ass work [on *UltraForce* and *I-Bots*], until—again—I started losing enthusiasm. There was something a little depressing about realizing I was doing that much work and no one was looking at it.

"I was no longer a major player. I was getting offered, paid, incredible amounts of money, but I wasn't having a good time. I didn't have the thrill of doing the characters I grew up with, and because they were the characters that were popular, they were the characters more fans—more new fans—were going to see."

Tekno was failing, Malibu was failing—the bloom of the boom was off the rose.

"The companies were falling apart," Pérez explains. "The big, high sales numbers we were experiencing were not there anymore, and maybe it was a bit of ego, but I was bothered by the fact I was starting to be forgotten.

"My deals with Malibu and Tekno came out of the fact this was an age when people were offering ridiculously high page rates. I was taking on projects my attorney had gotten for me, loaded with special deals, special bonuses and page rates that were triple or quadruple what I used to get. During those years, I probably earned more money in the industry than I ever had before. Those years were also the least satisfying for me."

Feeling almost obligated to try to help the staff at Malibu, which had, in the interim, been purchased by Marvel, Pérez agreed to pencil *UltraForce/Avengers*, a crossover of the two companies' premier super-teams.

In the process…in the art…he re-ignited his passion.

"I did *UltraForce/Avengers* and realized I missed those characters. I missed the Avengers. I think *UltraForce/ Avengers* was what finally gave me a taste of what I'd been lacking."

Pérez felt reborn. His goal was clear:

"I have to get back into the game."

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ULTRAFORCE
AVENGERS
#1
DIRECT EDITION
AVENGERS
ULTRAFORCE
#1
DIRECT EDITION

V

RETURNS AND RESURRECTIONS

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"We did the things that defied the physical laws of the areas where the Surfer was. We wanted to experiment with places no one's ever heard of the Silver Surfer."

George Pérez's spring coiled late in 1995; his passion, long-compressed by disappointment, doubt and an art-killing lack of enthusiasm, needed an outlet. His desire, restrained for half a decade, craved release.

His creative fires re-lit, the creator sought to reclaim the career he believed he'd lost, a redemptive quest that began in the most unlikely of places—outer space.

Ignoring the ill-starred ending of Pérez's last interstellar story, *The Infinity Gauntlet*, Marvel Editor Mark Gruenwald asked the creator to assume the writing responsibilities for *Silver Surfer*.

"Mark liked my *Wonder Woman*," Pérez says. "He liked the fact I thought a little outside the box and wanted to do something different with the *Silver Surfer*."

Gruenwald, he recalled, encouraged him to explore the enormity of space. The fact the Silver Surfer always kept running into the same people and repeatedly met recognizable characters of the Marvel Universe seemed preposterous. Pérez, therefore, tried to send the Surfer to places "even he may have not traveled yet."

"That was the concept, wherein we did the things that defied the physical laws of the areas where the Surfer was," he says. "We wanted to experiment with places no one's ever heard of the Silver Surfer, where they don't see him as the herald of Galactus."

Marvel, however, disagreed with the series' direction, and after Gruenwald's death, Pérez—as he did when he lost Berger on *Wonder Woman*—found himself without his biggest supporter.

"We never resolved the plot we'd set up, and Marvel—after I left—treated it as if my stories never happened. They never referred to our plot again."

The lack of closure on the project left Pérez, as he had been so often of late, disappointed, but, unlike in years prior, he refused to allow the disappointment to weigh him down.

He began channeling his artistic energies into a creator-owned project called *Crimson Plague* and, while refining the concept, got wind of a new *Titans* project in the works at DC. The series, which would feature an all-new team of Titans, was to be written and penciled by Dan Jurgens.

When Pérez offered his services as an inker, he learned just how far his reputation had fallen. Though *War of the Gods* and *Games* ended years earlier, DC's recollection of the disastrous projects remained fresh. The company executives bristled with reluctance when they heard he was being considered for a role—*any* role—on a monthly title.

"They were hesitant," he says, "even to bring me on as an inker."

Jurgens and editor Eddie Berganza stuck up for Pérez, though; having both received his assurances that he would devote himself to the title, they championed him for the job. DC acquiesced, and Pérez rejoined the Titans.

"I inked 15 issues straight, without missing a beat," he says. "And I was nominated for an Eisner award [as an inker]."

The book didn't fare nearly as well.

"It just tanked. The series never really caught on," Pérez offers. "It was no one's fault. I don't think Dan was given the support that later Titans creators were. They told him he could use the Titans' name, but not any of the Titans. I think that disappointed people. Even though he did bring some of the original Titans characters in later, the damage was already done."

Financially, the book's failure hit Pérez hard. He'd hoped his *Titans* royalties would help offset the costs of producing *Crimson Plague*, which he'd released through Event Comics, but the proceeds were almost nonexistent.

"I actually inked two pages on the Superman wedding issue, and from those two pages alone," he said, "I earned more cumulative royalties than I did inking an entire year's worth of *Titans*.

"I ended that experience with two failures," Pérez says of *Crimson Plague* and *Titans*, "and I was getting too many failures under my belt."

He needed a success. He needed to get back to basics. He needed to start over.

The same could be said for the Avengers. Like Pérez, Earth's Mightiest Heroes had gone through some rough times. An ill-conceived project called "Heroes Reborn" ripped the heroic squad from the regular Marvel continuity and plunked them down into an alternate reality, one in which they became the playthings of creator Rob Liefeld.

All of the Avengers "started over" in the new universe, reliving their origins with subtle tweaks (intended to update the characters for a new generation)

© George Perez

Crimson Plague #1, Event Comics—*Pérez's creator-owned "hybrid science-fiction/horror/action/superhero" saga spun from a concept the artist had written for, but never formally submitted to, DC Comics.*

Avengers represented more than just a monthly book, it represented an opportunity, and a fantastic one, at that. Pérez knew he couldn't allow the chance to slip away, no matter the doubts caused by his recent troubles. Because of those troubles, he couldn't afford to.

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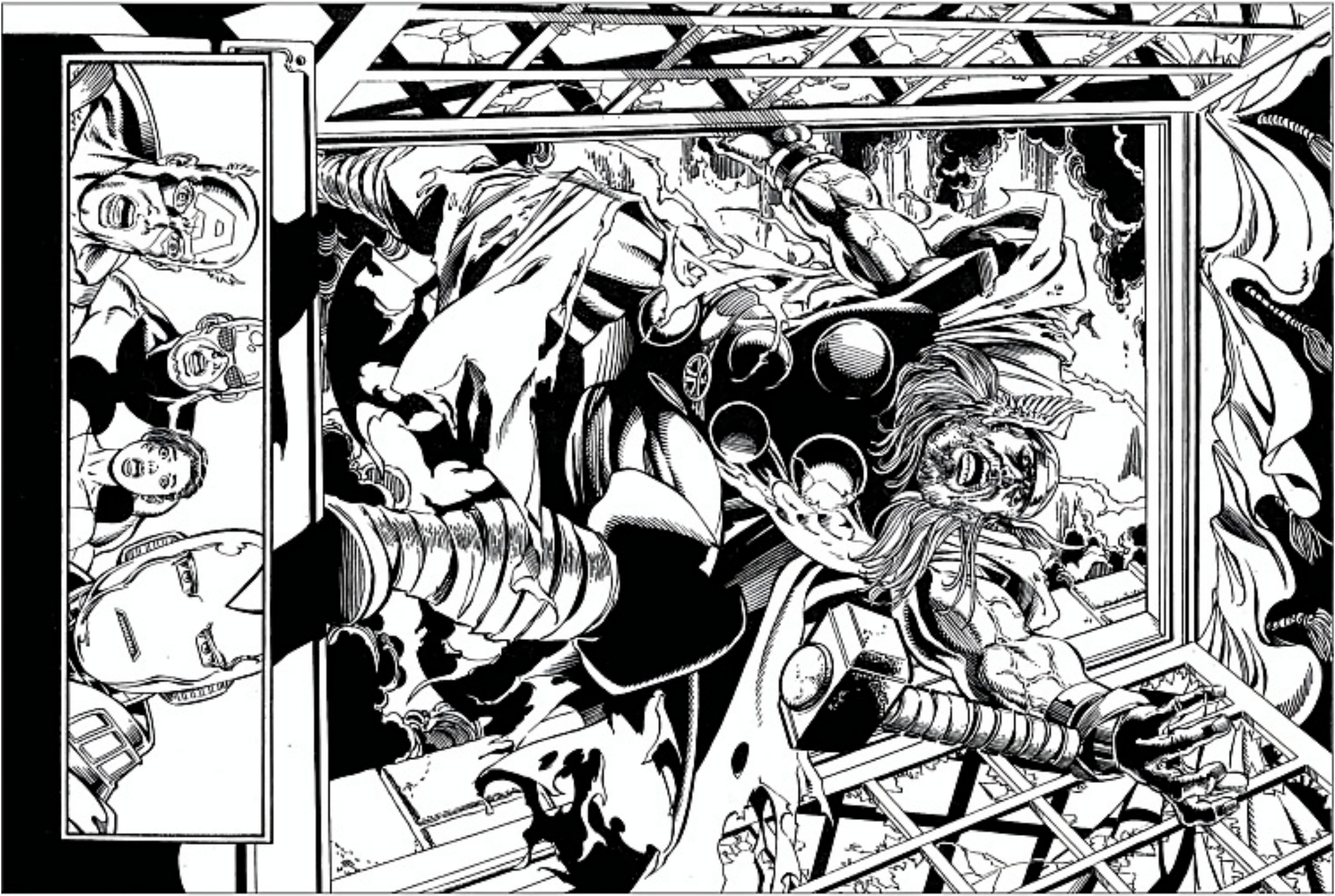

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and leaving them with no memories of the world they left behind.

The line failed to find an audience, and, after a year, Marvel decided to bring the Avengers—the true Avengers—home.

Who better to welcome them, editor Ralph Macchio thought, than Pérez?

Macchio contacted the storyteller and asked him to write the Avengers back into the Marvel Universe as part of a larger project called "Heroes Return." Pérez, who "hadn't read an *Avengers* comic in ten years," knew he couldn't possibly handle the job.

"Well," the editor countered, "what about penciling it?"

The possibility intrigued the artist, but he still had doubts—and says he'd have been surprised if Macchio wasn't having them, too.

"There would be commercial value to my pencilling it," he says, "but Ralph had to be doubting I'd say yes, because I'd made it quite clear I didn't think I was ready for a monthly book."

But *Avengers* represented more than just a monthly book; it represented an opportunity, and a fantastic one, at that. Pérez knew he couldn't allow the chance to slip away, no matter the doubts caused by his recent troubles. Because of those troubles, he couldn't afford to.

"If I wanted any career boost, I had to commit myself," Pérez says. "My feeling was, if I didn't commit to a book, why should we expect the fans to commit to the book?"

© George Pérez

The initial failure of Crimson Plague *led Pérez to revisit the pages of one of his earliest successes:* Marvel's Avengers.

He accepted the position.

"I need to be vital in this industry again," he said. "Whatever the standard page rate, I will do it."

George's agent, Harris Miller, agreed rejoining *Avengers* was a good move, but had his own ideas as to what his talent should earn.

"Once my lawyer got involved, I wound up making ridiculous money for *The Avengers*," Pérez shares, "but this was a book I'd have taken even if I'd gotten the least amount of cash possible. I just wanted to see if I could do it again."

His signing immediately drew attention to the "Heroes Return" project, and—according to his recollection—served as a recruiting tool. "A lot of the other creators came on because I was on board," he says. "My name lent a measure of credibility."

Credibility, perhaps; doubts, definitely.

Retailers expressed concerns that the sales of the "Heroes Return" books weren't going to be as strong as they were for "Heroes Reborn," and wondered whether Pérez's "old" style—it wasn't Image, nor was it new wave—would be able to hold anyone's attention. As for deadlines, the "Heroes Reborn" books fell behind schedule early on, and given Pérez's track record for timeliness and persistence, would the "Heroes Return" books be any different?

"Mark Waid and others were pretty much gambling that I was not going to last six issues," Pérez laughs.

Avengers' scribe Kurt Busiek elaborates: "There was a perception that George would likely be the guy who needed a fill-in artist first of the 'Heroes Return' gang, and he was, in fact, the guy who went the longest without a fill in—15 issues, two of them double-sized."

None of the other artists lasted nine.

"I beat all the odds," Pérez says. "I was very, very happy."

His happiness quickly turned to ecstasy. Not only was he back on the book he'd first aspired to draw, not only did he get to pencil every hero who's served as an Avenger (in issue #1), fans and critics alike lauded the work. From the get-go, Busiek and Pérez's *Avengers* found a home near the top of Diamond Comic Distributor's monthly sales list.

"The book sold," Pérez says. "Despite the fact I was an artist of a lot of years, that I was not the new face out there, the book sold. It was a consistent top ten book the entire time I was on the series."

"[George] brought a sense of history and tradition," Busiek offers. "His versatility with faces and with large casts was a godsend, too. His detailed backgrounds, his energy in drawing action, his emotional staging of dramatic sequences—it all adds up to something special, something that nobody else has ever quite matched."

In Busiek, Pérez found a chemistry comparable to the type he shared with Titans collaborator Wolfman.

Avengers #1 — *Because of* Avengers, *fans, novice and experienced, and readers, new and old, began commenting on Pérez's style of art. They talked about the intricacy of the linework and marveled at the detail he managed to shoehorn into every page. And though, as Kurt Busiek points out, Pérez had "gotten a lot better at making his characters distinctive and had gotten more distinctive and adventurous about staging scenes," the artist himself claims modern reproduction techniques played a vital role in the realization and appreciation of his art.*

"It was as close as I've come to working with Marv," the artist says. "It was a wonderful, wonderful relationship."

Because of his experiences writing *Wonder Woman* and the *Silver Surfer*, Pérez declined taking an active role in the creation of the new *Avengers* tales. He satisfied his storytelling desires by using his artwork to add flourishes to his partner's plots, re-choreographing fights, lending subtleties to characters' faces and adding personality to their body language.

"When it came to the story itself, I left that to Kurt and editor Tom Brevoort," he admits. "I didn't want the responsibility of trying to go through all the Avengers trivia. Kurt had been consistently reading the book, where I hadn't read it in many years."

Despite his increased proficiency as a writer, Pérez had no desire to be involved in what he considered the most political part of creating comics—story content. Doing so, he says, forces one to deal with a much more nebulous system of checks and balances.

"Comic art, they can look at it and say, 'That's good, that's not good.' Period," he explains. "Ideas are something you have to sell a lot harder, and I didn't really want to go through that. I was more than happy to leave that in the capable hands of Kurt Busiek."

For his own part, Busiek says it was "a blast" working with Pérez, watching the artist—whose work he had grown up reading—realize his plots with "an amazing amount of energy and majesty."

"Whether it was researching historical mansions to make the HQ look distinctive and realistic, or packing a million things on a page without losing clarity or storyflow, or whatever, George brought an amazing amount of

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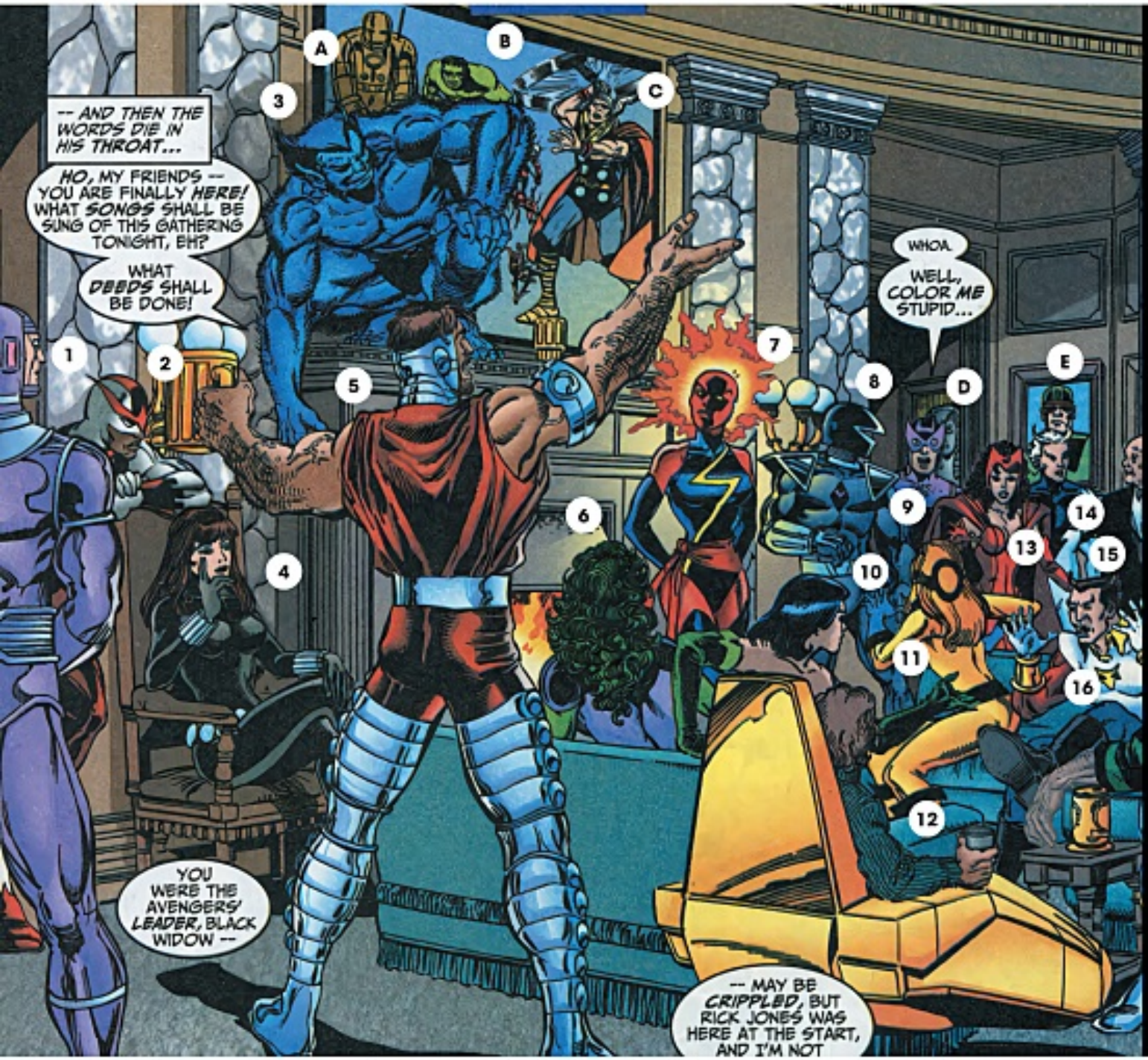

commitment to the book," the writer offers. "He didn't treat it like just another job, but like a unique opportunity to figure out what was best for this one book, this one issue, this one story, whatever, and then deliver that, pedal to the metal."

And, he adds, Pérez was always up for a challenge:

"I'd joke about crowding the stories with too many characters, but he'd just laugh and tell me to bring it on. In #10, with the Avengers parade, I asked for a page with eighty-some villains on it, and he drew them all and then added a couple of dozen more.

"Getting into the spirit of things, when George drew a double-page splash with dozens of Ultrons on it, Al Vey added a few more in the inks, just to see if George would notice."

The title garnered numerous citations, including *Comics Buyer's Guide* Fan Awards for favorite writer, penciler,

1. Machine Man
2. Falcon
3. Beast
4. Black Widow
5. Hercules
6. She-Hulk
7. Ms. Marvel
8. Darkhawk
9. Hawkeye
10. Sersi
11. Crystal
12. Rick Jones
13. Scarlet Witch
14. Quicksilver
15. Jarvis
16. Starfox
17. Magdalene
18. Sandman
19. Moon Dragon
20. D-Man
21. Swordsman
22. Black Panther
23. Namor
24. Spider-Woman
25. USAgent
26. Tigra
27. Spider-Man
28. Rage
29. Firestar
30. Justice
31. Living Lightning
32. Photon
33. Black Knight
34. Stingray
35. Quasar
36. Vision
37. Firebird
A. Iron Man
B. Hulk
C. Thor
D. Jocasta
E. Wonder Man

-- AND STILL MORE? HOW MANY AVENGERS ARE THERE, ANYWAY?
-- TO STEER IT AWAY FROM THE VILLAGE BY JABBING AT ITS EYES --
-- A SHAME WAR MACHINE'S OUT OF THE BUSINESS --
-- HAMMOND PASSED, BUT IF WE NEED THE HEROES FOR HIRE --
-- SAY THE PRESENCE MYSTERIOUSLY VANISHED, AND VANGUARD --
MORE THAN WE EVER HAD, THAT'S FOR SURE. BUT WITH ALL THE ATTACKS --
-- THAT STENCH?
-- LEFT MY DAUGHTER WITH A SITTER, SO I HOPE --
-- TIED UP WITH THE NEW BUSINESS, BUT WHEN THE AVENGERS CALL --
-- OH, DEATHCRY SENDS HER REGARDS, BY THE WAY --
-- NOT SURE WE SHOULD BE HERE --
¡CASPITA! LOOK WHO JUST CAME IN!
SIMMER DOWN, MIGUEL. IT'S NICE TO SEE SO MANY OLD FRIENDS, BUT --
-- ALL THESE ATTACKS -- --BRRR!-- I KEEP JUMPING AT SHADOWS --
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editor, inker and comic book; *Wizard* Fan Awards for favorite ongoing series, penciler and Comics' Greatest Moment; and Squiddies for best penciler, story and creative team.

The Avengers were, once again, Earth's Mightiest Heroes, and George Pérez was back on top.

"*Avengers* made him a superstar again," Busiek explains. "The combination of a big book with great art and a lot of promotion gave him a shot at winning the attention of a huge audience, and, George being George, he did it.

"*Avengers* gave him the kind of rep he'd had back on *Titans*."

Crowds again followed the artist at comic book conventions; fans waited in line for hours to commission a convention sketch, get an autograph or just to sneak an up-close peek at one of his trademark Hawaiian shirts. Pérez had not only been remembered; he'd been discovered anew.

"One boy who saw my work commented I had the talent to become the next Todd McFarlane," he laughs. "For him, I was newer than Todd—he'd seen Todd's work before mine.

"That's the greatest thing…when a fan sees my name on a comic—if it's the first comic of mine he's picked up—he has no knowledge that I'm a veteran of all these years. If he sees my name and he likes it on the first try, it doesn't matter that I've been working 30 years. Or three years. I am new, and that is a great, great feeling."

Because of *Avengers*, fans, novice and experienced, and readers, new and old, began commenting on Pérez's style of art. They talked about the intricacy of the linework and marveled at the detail he managed to shoehorn into every page. And though, as Busiek points out, Pérez had "gotten a lot better at making his characters distinctive and had gotten more distinctive and adventurous about staging scenes," the artist himself claims modern reproduction techniques played a vital role in the realization and appreciation of his art:

"I was doing details in the 1970s, but the reproduction was crappy. Now, I was able to do even more stuff, so I came off a little more contemporary than people would have expected.

"I like to think that my enthusiasm, which was shown on the page because of the amount of work I put into it, was something the fans could see."

In all honesty, it would've been hard for them to miss.

Pérez's ingenuity saturated the first arc of the new *Avengers*, collectively titled "The Morgan Conquest." The artist jumpstarted the series by penciling every Avenger ever to pull on a superhero suit; then, as the storyline unfolded, he redesigned each of the heroes to coincide with a medieval reality created by the sorceress Morgan LeFey.

Thor became Donar the Mighty, and Iron Man went by Iron Knight. Tigra transformed into Grimalkin,

> *"I'd joke about crowding the stories with too many characters, but he'd just laugh and tell me to bring it on. In #10, with the Avengers parade, I asked for a page with eighty-some villains on it, and he drew them all and then added a couple of dozen more."*
>
> —Kurt Busiek

Hawkeye morphed into Longbow and the Vision was known as the Ghost of Stone.

As the series progressed (and the Avengers returned to the "real world"), Pérez renewed his familiarity with the characters and their behaviors, and grew more ambitious in his panel designs and story breakdowns. Each splash page (such as the one featuring an enraged Thor at the start of issue #6) seemed somehow more dramatic, each fight seemingly increased in intensity. The Avengers battled, then teamed up with, the Squadron Supreme; fought against, then alongside, the Thunderbolts; they even threw down with the reanimated corpses of their distinguished (and deceased) former teammates.

Busiek could have been referencing the series itself when, in *Avengers* #0, he wrote: "Whether they've been battling the Squadron Supreme, mind-controlled heroes of another world, to prove their bona fides, preventing longtime foe the Grim Reaper from bringing about a literal hell on earth in Manhattan's Central Park or standing against the destructive rampages of the violent and demonic Pagan in Texas and Times Square, the Avengers have captured the world's attention like never before."

And the series kept getting better.

If the first year and a half of Busiek and Pérez's *Avengers* run snared readers' attentions, the months that followed riveted them to their seats. With "Ultron Unlimited," a blockbuster of a story if ever there was one, Marvel's mightiest creative teammates raised their book to previously unrealized heights.

In the arc, Ultron, the invulnerable robotic "son" of Avenger Henry Pym, commits an act of genocide, murdering every man, woman and child in the European nation of Slorenia, bringing him—once again—into deadly conflict with the Avengers.

Pérez's work on the storyline was both consistently amazing and amazingly consistent, dazzling even a veteran talent like Busiek.

"I write the best stories I know how, but they're my stories, stuff that I made up," he says. "When they come back from George, not only has he staged them a little differently and brought through the energy of the plot and characterization in his own particular way, it's drawn in that fabulous Pérez style.

"And all of a sudden, it's the Avengers. It's bigger, it's bolder, it's cooler than whatever I was imagining in my head."

Yet for all its visual bombast, its dramatic intensity and frenetic pacing, Pérez's *Avengers* art also displayed a remarkable degree of delicacy, a masterful level of graphic savoir-faire.

Early on, readers could see the Vision's struggle with his feelings for the Scarlet Witch, the pain and sorrow pain-stakingly reflected in the cock of his head and the arch of his ruby brows. The lines of Warbird's face seethed with denial, anger and guilt when the Avengers confronted her about her drinking problem, and Pérez infused real sympathy in the eyes of recovered alcoholic Tony Stark.

In a haunting image from issue #19, Pérez has the team members stare at the reader, their faces frozen in looks of sadness, shock, disbelief and revulsion as they witness the horrors of Ultron's onslaught. In the following chapter, he depicts Ultron standing atop the bodies of his Slorenian victims, panels that include the artist's trademark detail without ever sacrificing a sense of decency or good taste.

His penciling acumen extended to the story's settings, as well. The second issue of "Ultron Unlimited" called for a meeting between the Avengers and military officials in a military briefing area. Busiek expected his partner would take a straightforward approach to the scene, draw a simple conference room or, at most, something like a secret bunker.

He should have known better.

Pérez delivered a three-quarter page spread, setting the Avengers at the bottom of a technology-laden tactical defense silo, ringed by level upon level of buzzing military analysts.

"It was stunning," Busiek said. "An example of

-- FEELING A CURIOUS MIXTURE OF PRIDE, IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE PICTS CANNOT HOPE TO STAND AGAINST SUCH A FORCE, AND FEAR --
-- IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HOW EASILY SUCH FORCE COULD BE TURNED AGAINST THEM, FOR THOSE WHO FLY ABOVE ARE THE QUEEN'S VENGEANCE --
-- AND WHEN THEY STRIKE, THEY STRIKE WITHOUT HESITATION OR MERCY.

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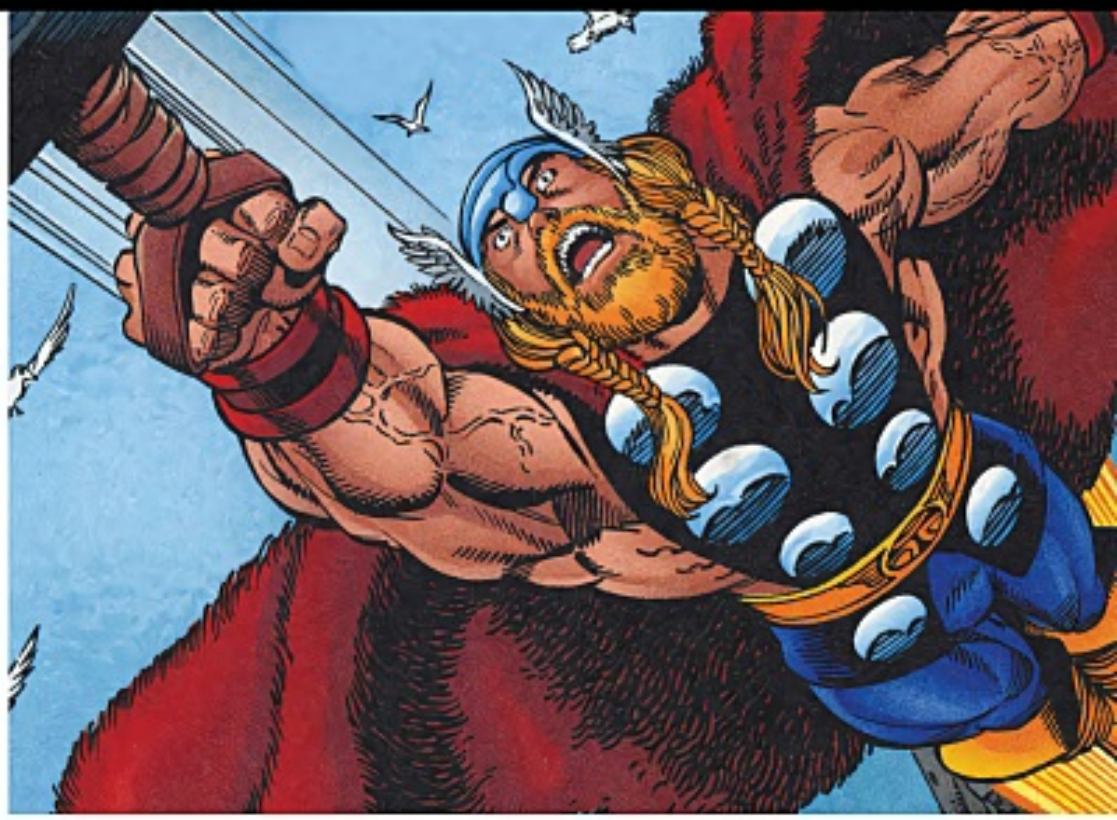
GYPSY WITCH

Pérez redesigned the costumes of the Avengers for "The Morgan Conquest" storyline, transforming classic characters such as Thor, Iron Man, Captain America and the Scarlet Witch into Donar the Mighty, the Iron Knight, Yeoman America and the Gypsy Witch, respectively.

DONAR



George looking for a place that he could do more that it would serve the story.

"Readers respond to his energy, whether it's expressed in billions of broken bits of rubble or a single powerful punch, or a dizzying chasm of machinery that looks like it goes down for miles. George is never satisfied with 'enough.' He always goes further.

"He tackles every job like he's still a newcomer, still someone who has to prove himself with every single book that hits the stands. He's trying to grab each new reader just as hard as he did thirty years ago. That's not something a lot of artists who've been in the game that long do, and I think it's why George keeps packin' them in."

Pérez continued to pack the fans in for the duration of his run, which ended with *Avengers* #34. His diabetes, diagnosed in the 1980s, became an issue toward the latter part of his tenure.

"I needed to slow down," he said. "My blood pressure rose—I needed to control things better."

Fatigue started to set in, and the artist—who, including double-sized issues, had drawn the equivalent of a three-year run—found himself unable to maintain the monthly schedule.

"I was at a point where it was taking me longer to get the book out—it was time to move on to something else," he explains. "I didn't want to happen what had happened before—I'd rather leave while I was still on top."

He contacted Tom Brevoort and told his editor he'd be calling it a day, that he didn't want to fall behind to the point he would become a detriment to the book.

"The storyline was ending; it was a good time for me to go," Pérez offers. "Leave, leaving them wanting more."

There would be no tapering off with *Avengers*, no slow death as there was on *Wonder Woman*. Fans and colleagues alike greeted his departure with kudos and thanks. They thanked him for doing a fantastic job. They thanked him for returning *Avengers* to the top. They thanked him for staying for the better part of three years.

"The irony being, of course, that for a person no one thought would stay on the book for longer than six months, there hasn't been an artist who's followed me to have stayed on as long as I did," he says.

Reflecting on his *Avengers* run, Pérez expresses the

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"Readers respond to his energy, whether it's expressed in billions of broken bits of rubble or a single powerful punch, or a dizzying chasm of machinery that looks like it goes down for miles. George is never satisfied with 'enough.' He always goes further."

—Kurt Busiek

hope that the enthusiasm he put into his work was contagious. The industry, he says, had too long suffered a dearth of passion, a scarcity of excitement, a general malaise rooted in the behavior of creators that left the readers disenchanted, like a sports fan who thinks his idol is only in the business for the money.

"We, in comics, weren't enthusiastic enough," Pérez offers. "Comics weren't being produced by people who seemed to love comics as much as they should. I was in there. I was making the same decisions. I was doing comics for the money and not for the sheer joy of it.

"When I went on the *Avengers*, it wasn't that way at all. I was back on the playing field I started in, with the characters I love, with years of experience and evolution in my art style. I wanted to kick some butt. I was hungry. I wanted to relish every moment of it."

He traces his insatiable appetite for success to the years in which he felt his career was "slacking off."

"I was considered a once-hot comics creator," Pérez recounts. "I actually read that in a few places. So the pressure was on, because I hoped *Avengers* would sell well. All I wanted to do was produce a kick-ass comic."

By all accounts—critical, commercial and personal—he did just that. *Avengers*, the series that first defined Pérez's career, became the title that resuscitated it.

"Mark Waid called mine one of the rare John Travolta careers," the artist shares. "Travolta started hot, fizzled out and managed to get hot again. I lucked out in that way."

Pérez pauses, thinks for a moment, then begins again.

"Part of it was luck, but part of it was me," he says. "I *had* to do my best work. I didn't want to be a has-been or a non-vital member of the comics community. And now that I've had more than 30 years in the industry, I'm still weighing offers.

"It's a very, very gratifying feeling."

And there came a *day*, a day unlike any *other*, when *Earth's mightiest heroes and heroines* found themselves *united* against a common threat. On that day, the *Avengers* were born — to fight the foes no *single* super hero could withstand! Through the years, their roster has *prospered*, changing *many times*, but their *glory* has never been denied! Heed the *call*, then — for now, the *Avengers Assemble!*

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Avengers, Vol. 1 #148 vs. Avengers, Vol. 3 #5

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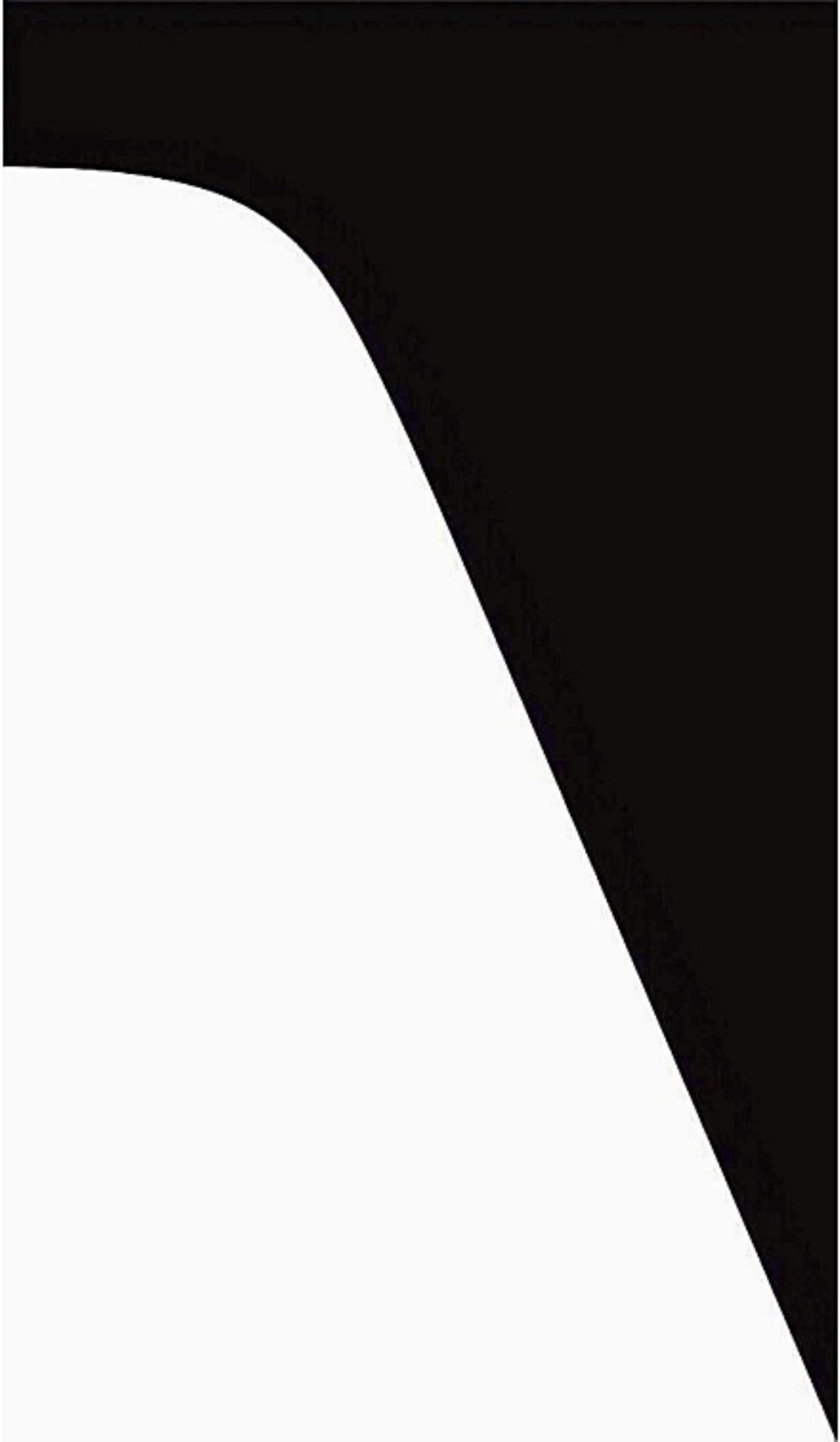

VI

LIVING THE DREAM

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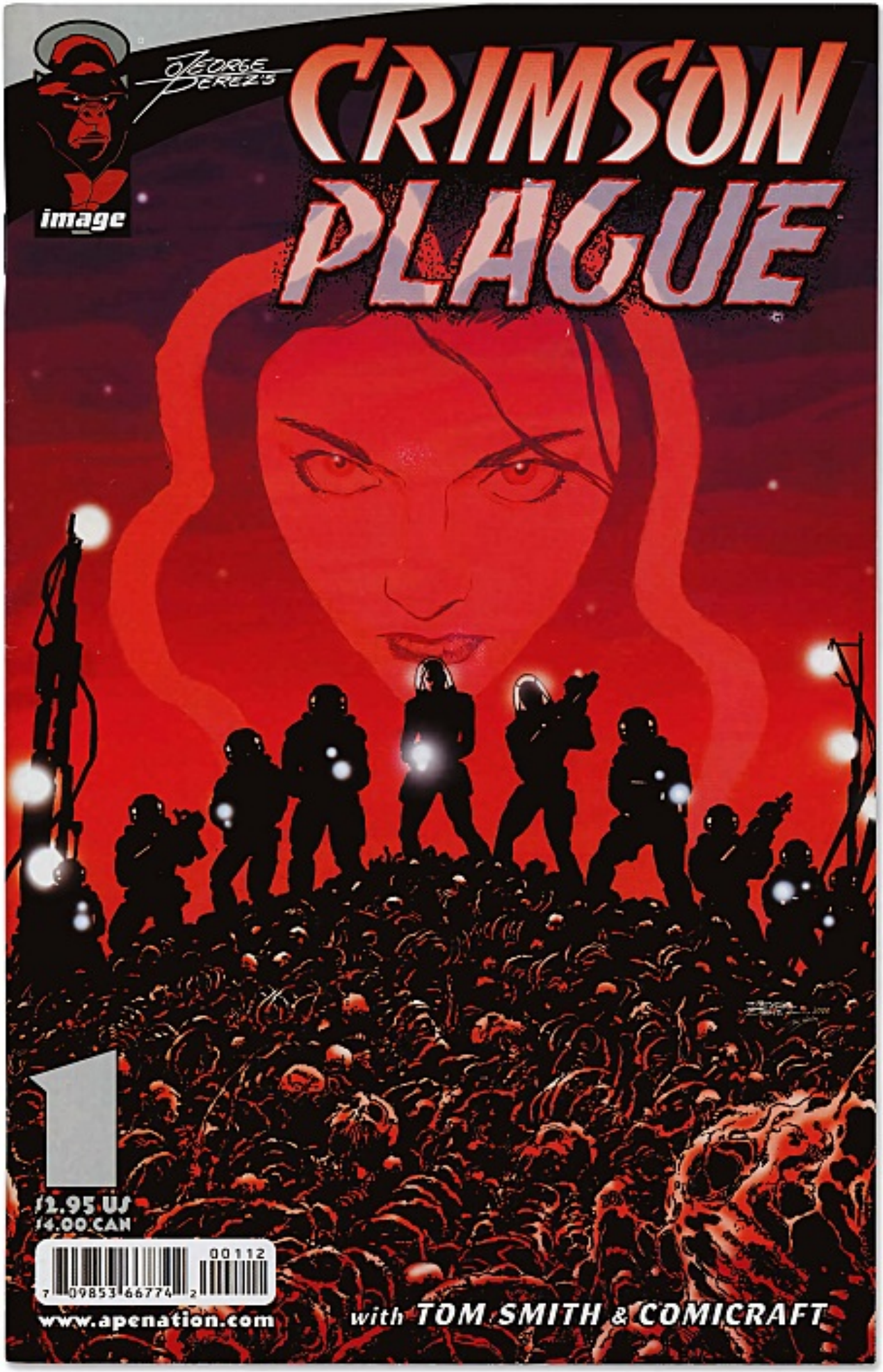


© George Pérez

Courtesy his run on *Avengers*, the storyteller sat atop the comic world, quite the accomplishment given that he was, as he put it, a 45-year-old in "a young medium."

"A lot of artists in my generation were struggling for work," he said. "And I had to turn people down because I had a limited amount of time to draw things."

Pérez's career, in the ten years pre-*Avengers*, had been a roller coaster of a ride, with highs like *Future Imperfect* and *Sachs & Violens* and lows like *War of the Gods* and *I-Bots*. But the artist persevered, re-establishing his reliability, appropriately enough, with the Teen Titans and resuscitating his career penciling Earth's Mightiest Heroes.

"The decade," he says, "was more like a typical year for any artist—you have your hits and misses."

One miss, commercially, at least, was his creator-owned project, *Crimson Plague*. Pérez started the series independently, a "hybrid science-fiction/horror/action/superhero" saga based on a concept he'd written, but never formally submitted, to DC.

Pérez envisioned a story in which Nightwing, verifying the death of a DOA he knows to be Batman, relives and retraces history through the scars on his mentor's corpse. The macabre premise evolved into a series called *Gladiator*, which followed a similar storyline, but with self-created characters, one of whom the artist named Plague.

A female antagonist of the Gladiator, one "similar to Catwoman, in terms of her relationship with Batman," Plague's body served as a living vessel for one of the deadliest toxins known to science. A single drop of her blood—the plague from which she took her appellation—could kill a man almost instantly.

When Dina Simmons, the model for the Plague character, pointed out that, as an adult human female, Plague would experience a menstrual cycle, the character became exponentially more frightening—and infinitely more appealing—to Pérez.

"That changed not only the entire tone of the character, but the entire direction of the series," he said. "I found the character of Plague, whom my wife renamed Crimson Plague, much more interesting than Gladiator. I scrapped Gladiator initially, then concentrated on DiNA: Simmons, Crimson Plague."

Crimson Plague *#1, Gorilla Comics — Gorilla Comics provided Pérez with a place to publish his work without any interference from an overriding editorial source. No crossovers, no shared universes, no restrictions—a perfect setting for the resurrection of* Crimson Plague.

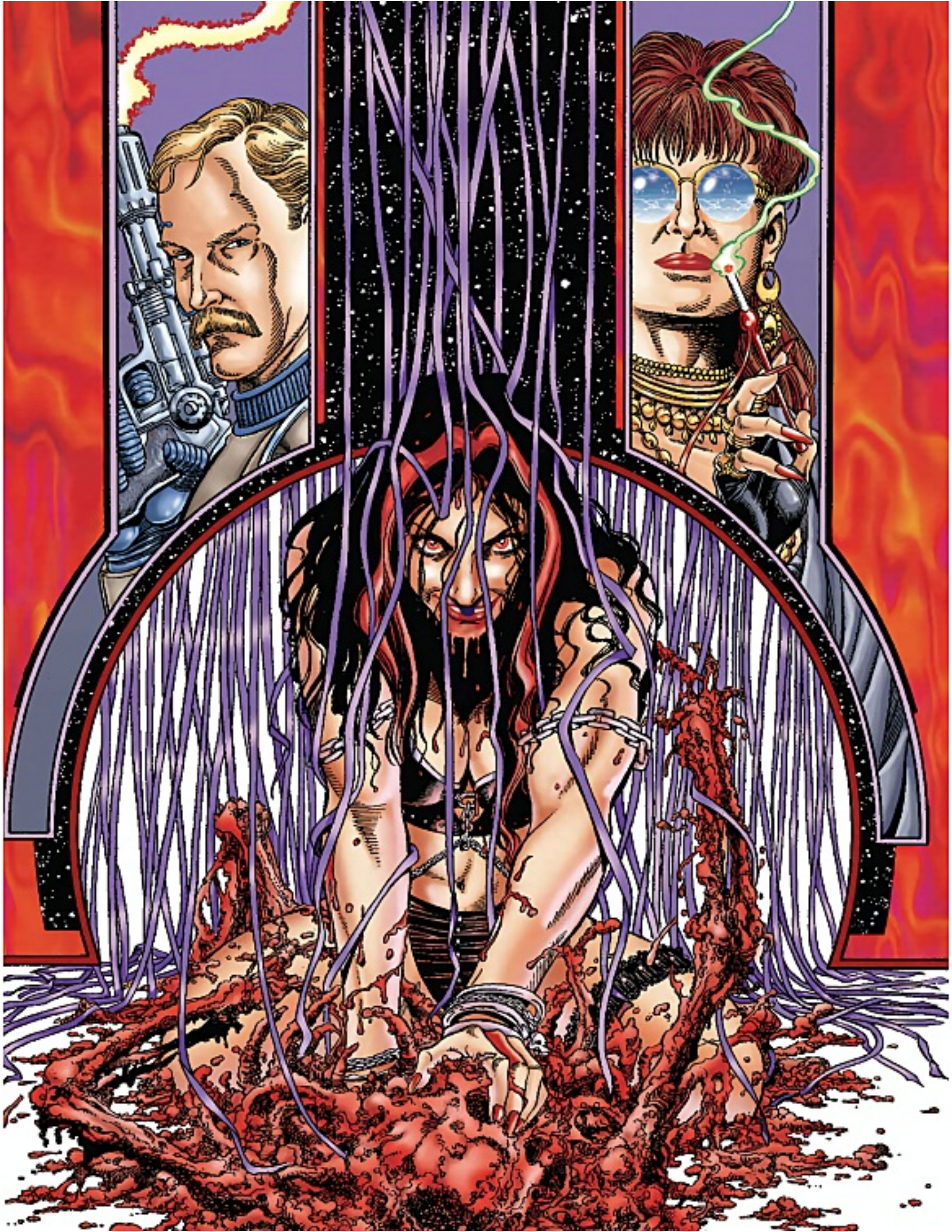
Though Image and several other publishers expressed an interest in the book, Pérez—who was inking Dan Jurgens' *Titans* at the time—began prepping the title for publication on his own. He'd already finished the majority of the first issue when Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti offered to print the project under the banner of their Event Comics.

The failure of *Titans*, however, dropped Pérez into debt—hedging his bets, he expected royalties from the book to cover the costs of *Crimson Plague*—and though Event released the series' premiere in June 1997, issue #2 never saw print.

"I just couldn't afford to put it out," he said.

Three years later, perhaps inspired by his own return to comics, Pérez decided to give DiNA: Simmons (the title character's actual name) another chance. He had, in conjunction with a consortium of creators (including Busiek, Mark Waid, Barry Kitson, Karl Kesel, Stuart Immonen, Mike Wieringo, Todd Dezago, Tom Grummett and Joe Kelly) formed Gorilla Comics, an imprint that would provide shelter for whatever projects its "Banana Trust" could devise, a place they could publish without any interference from an overriding editorial source. No crossovers, no shared universes: the talent would be left to their own devices.

Pérez viewed the venture as "a nice way" to resurrect *Crimson Plague*. The series' pre-existing status at Event circumvented the exclusive contract he'd signed with



Marvel, and the loophole allowed him to work on the Gorilla book while wrapping up the remainder of his run on *Avengers*.

"Because of *Avengers*' success, I wouldn't be too dependent upon the success of *Crimson Plague*," Pérez reasoned. "My finances didn't rest on it—*Avengers* paid my bills."

As for Gorilla's bills, an Internet start-up company called eHero.com pledged to cover them, speculating the publicity generated by the superstar-driven comics line would draw attention to its own e-commerce site.

With eHero's guarantees in place, Pérez set his mind to engineering the resurrection of *Crimson Plague*. Since the first issue of the series had originally been printed by Event, Pérez opted to add a full-issue's worth of new material to the Gorilla reprint, extra pages he hoped would entice those who'd read the initial printing to pick up a new copy. As an added incentive, he priced the book at Gorilla's standard, single-issue rate, a move meant to increase the appeal of the comic while, he believed, averting any hard feelings on the part of the owners of the Event issue.

"I thought it'd be nice," he said. "They'd be getting a double-sized book for half what they'd ordinarily pay for such a package."

In hindsight, he describes the move as "total naivete" on his part, an ignorance for which he paid dearly. eHero reneged on its commitments, never having received the funding it pledged to Pérez and his partners.

"Unfortunately, a lot of decisions that were made on the entire Gorilla line were based on promises made which did not come to bear," the creator offers. "Suddenly, we were bearing the costs of stuff that was supposed to be borne by other backers, which never came about because the person who was handling it was a crook.

"We ended up more dependent upon our own incomes to support these books. We ended up in incredibly deep debt before the first pages of any of the books ever came out."

The cost of producing the initial issues already incurred, the members of the Banana Trust decided to honor the solicitations they'd made and launch Gorilla as planned. Busiek's *Shockrockets* hit first, followed by Waid's *Empire*, then the re-issued *Crimson Plague* #1.

"The book did well," Pérez said. "The figures were good. I didn't feel I had to earn double money on the pages that were already drawn."

Unfortunately, he failed to take into account the financial ramifications of printing an oversized issue—the printing bill was double the expected amount. Because of that oversight, Pérez wound up in debt following the first issue.

The additional expenses—promotion, travel, costume and modeling fees (Pérez used real people as inspiration for the characters in *Crimson Plague*)—further compounded matters financially; Pérez estimated he would lose an average of $5,000 per issue.

Plague's body served as a living vessel for one of the deadliest toxins known to science. A single drop of her blood—the plague from which she took her appellation—could kill a man almost instantly.

After printing *Crimson Plague* #2, he brought the series to an end again.

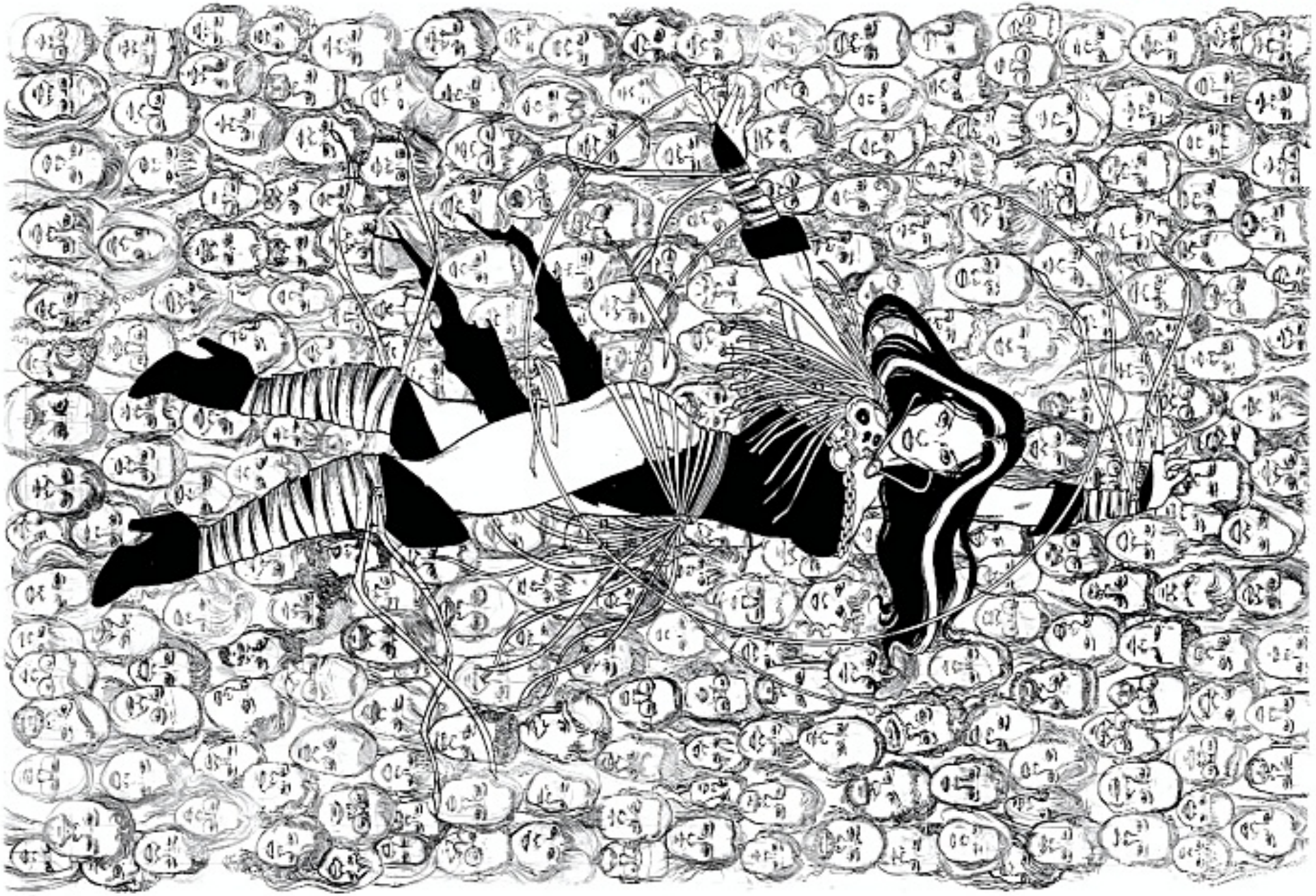
"It had to die," he says. "I had to put the nail in the coffin. I couldn't responsibly stay with it. There was no way. I'd tried it twice; I couldn't afford it."

Though Pérez regretted laying the concept to rest, he had no time to dwell on the demise of either *Crimson Plague* or Gorilla—another job offer had already materialized.

© George Pérez

"Despite the intense nature of the series, I wanted Crimson Plague to be a thank you to my fans—every character who was named and had a speaking part in the book was a real person."

—George Pérez



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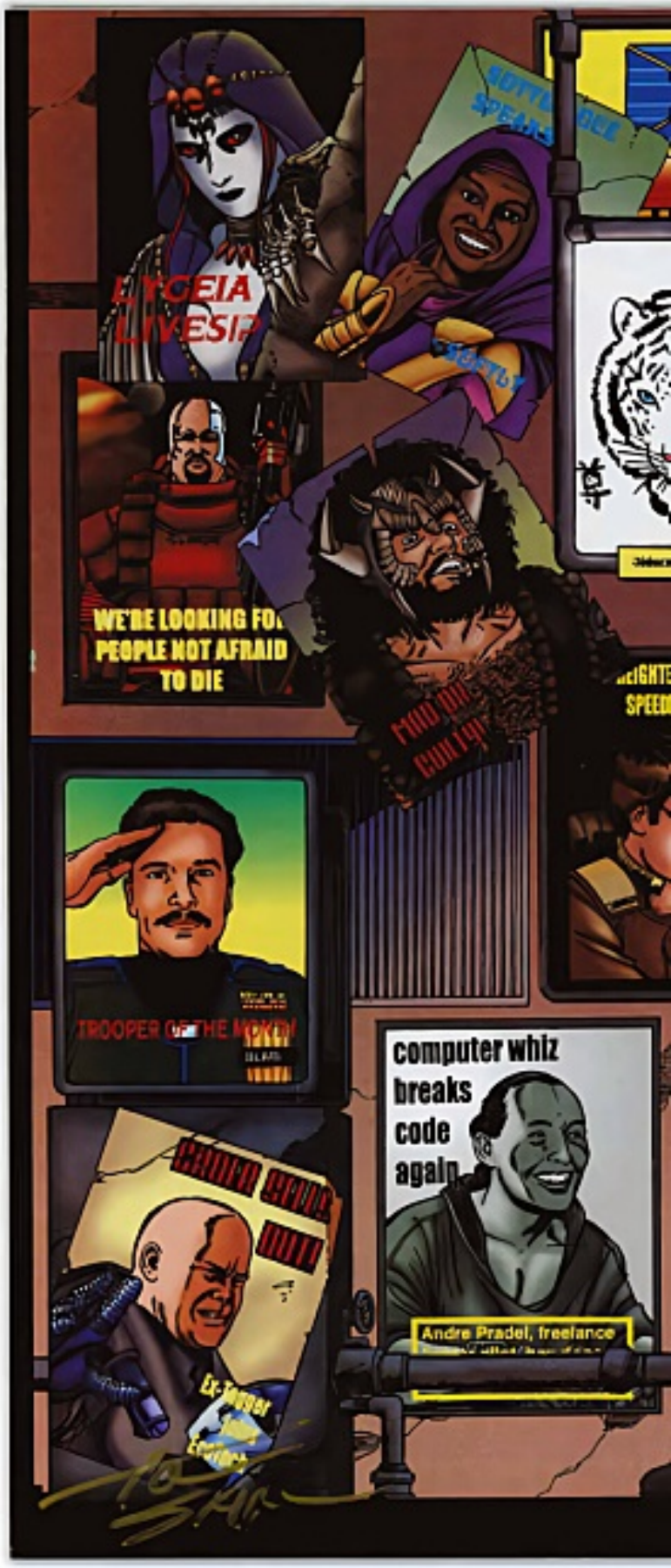

The proceeds from this special edition of Crimson Plague were, like so many of the convention projects Pérez has done, donated to charity: "The power to be able to make a difference with my name, the fact my name will give a certain legitimacy to an organization...It's quite a heavy responsibility, but so be it. If I can be of help because my name means something, then I'm glad I worked so hard to build up that name."

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CROSSGEN

Mark Alessi laid down the gauntlet. Having spent years following the comic industry, tracking its highs and lows, the millionaire businessman knew—and boldly declared—things needed to change.

"If somebody doesn't do the right things soon, everything I loved growing up will disappear," he said. "There's something magical about comics, about holding them in your hands, and, if we don't fix this industry, there will be a day when these things [comics] are curiosities."

His vision of "the right thing" materialized as CrossGeneration Comics, a company—launched in the summer of 2000—committed to producing high quality, multi-genre comic books on a responsible, timely basis. In order to meet those goals, Alessi recruited top-shelf talent—pencilers, inkers, writers and colorists—from around the globe and, selling them on the opportunity to be part of something great, brought them to the company's headquarters just outside Tampa, Florida.

For Pérez, himself a Floridian, CrossGen's home base was but a hop, skip and a jump away, so he didn't have far to go when the company's head writer, Barbara Kesel, first contacted him about giving CrossGen a try.

"We had this neat opportunity," says Kesel, who had edited Pérez on *The New Teen Titans*, "and it just coincided with a time in his life where he was looking to stretch his wings more, doing one step off what he'd done before."

Alessi followed Kesel's pitch with one of his own, and, in December of 2000, Pérez signed an exclusive deal with the fledgling company, accepting the entrepreneur's challenge to try something new. CrossGen's stories spanned a universe, with settings medieval and mystical, worlds of fantasy and science fiction.

"CrossGen offered me a chance to do something other than the superhero stories I've worked on regularly during my career in comics," said the artist, who hadn't drawn a true fantasy series in almost 20 years (since Atari's *Sword Quest* and his covers for DC's *Amethyst, Princess of Gemworld*). "They allowed me to diversify my artwork."

Though the artist wasn't part of the company's original creative roster, Alessi extended him the same perks and privileges accorded to a founder.

"It had been quite a while since I felt that wanted by a publisher," Pérez said. "CrossGen went out of its way to support my unique needs. I've never felt that much a part of an organization.

"Mark was incredibly generous in his offer. I got all the great perks of being an employee. It was a wonderful package…the respect they showed for my reputation in the industry and my talent."

The artist's "wonderful package" included a salary that nearly matched his page rate at DC or Marvel and, perhaps more importantly, a schedule the artist could more easily maintain—his sole responsibility was to pencil the bimonthly *CrossGen Chronicles*.

"CrossGen allowed me to slow down a bit," he says. "And because I was on salary, I could actually afford to do it"

Additionally, the company withheld his taxes, provided profit- and equity-sharing, and supplied him with a dental and medical health plan. The latter proved most important to Pérez, who left *Avengers* because of health concerns associated with his diabetes.

"The pace [at Marvel] was just too hard for me at that point," he explains. "CrossGen made life a little easier—a substantial salary, with taxes withheld, with insurance, and it all was based just on my producing one book a month. Actually, ten books a year.

"It was a good deal. Without the same time constraints I had to adhere to in order to make ends meet, I could do my best possible work."

Chronicles, an anthology series, spotlighted a different title of the CrossGen line in every issue. Each successive plot offered a new challenge for the artist—a new world, new heroes, new villains, new architecture—and supplied him ample opportunity to contribute his distinctive flair to the type of character-driven epics he loves.

Pérez's first CrossGen work appeared in *Chronicles* #2, a tale that retroactively set the stage for events in one of the company's other titles, Scion. The story took place on a planet called Avalon, a world where amazing technology hid beneath the cover of medieval pageantry, where a ritual combat kept the peace between the East and the West, between the warring nations of the Heron and the Raven.

Pérez delved into the story behind that combat, unveiling a saga of swashbuckling swordsmen and rollicking adventure on the high seas. The artist's incredible detail immersed the readers in the story's high-octane drama; his depiction of the roiling waters, combined with his decision to tilt the action within the panels, created a real sense of movement in the battle between the flagships of Heron and Raven nations, serving as one of the finest examples of what Pérez describes as his "storyboarding."

"I look at it like I'm directing a movie," he said. "A silent movie, where—so as to minimize the number of captions, word balloons or, in cinema terms, title cards that have to be put in the characters' mouths—you're trying to show as much of the action with the visuals.

"CrossGen offered me a chance to do something other than the superhero stories I've worked on," Pérez said. "They allowed me to diversify my artwork."

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"If you're a good storyteller, all the writer should have to do is add subtext and put in language, dialogue."

Chronicles gave Pérez a chance to shine, allowing him—in the span of only a few issues—to demonstrate the incredible spectrum of his skill. Within the first two issues of his brief run on the series, he successfully, masterfully, transitioned from the cannon fire and cut-throat action of *Scion* to a more personal, sentimental story in *Chronicles* #3. Built from the mythos of *Meridian*, the artist spun a love story that showcased both his talent for rendering the female form—the tale centers around a young girl's exploration of her mother's youth—and his limitless imagination.

For the opening spread, set on a fantastic floating island, he created a carnival-like feast, replete with dozens of partygoers, various athletic pursuits and a palpable sense of mirth.

Into that environment, he introduced three characters essential to the backstory of the regular series, a young nobleman named Turos, a female artist named Ideria, and Turos' brother, Ilahn. Relying heavily on his gift for rendering facial expressions and body language, Pérez orchestrated a classic love triangle, a powerful, emotional romance that writer Barbara Kesel ranks among the strongest works of her collaborator's career.

"George, now, draws significantly better than he used to," the scribe says. "If you look at his early work, it's more folk art. The overlay of [Romeo] Tanghal and other inkers [on his early *Avengers* and *Titans* issues] brought it more in line with standard comic book stuff. But he's always had the eye. George is just the master of being able to take 400,000 elements and lay them out on the page in a way that seems chaotic until you see all the design structure underneath it.

"He does, at the core, have more of a folk-art sensibility when it comes to art, rather than a fine rendering perspective approach, but he doesn't endlessly repeat himself. He sets up new design challenges for himself visually in the composition and layout of the pieces.

"His art comes across like rock and roll. It seems like there's all that noise, and then you see that very strong structure behind it."

Though Pérez initially had some reservations about joining the CrossGen family—his previous experiences with new companies and exorbitant pay rates didn't work out so well—in hindsight, he admits he made the right decision by signing on. Through his work with the company, he opened new eyes to his craft, his talent reaching fantasy fans who, he says, "really have no interest in costumed crimefighters."

"I will always be grateful to Mark Alessi," Pérez says, "and the entire CrossGen staff for the incredible respect they paid me and all the concessions they made for me. I'm enjoying a great deal of success now, and CrossGen helped get that ball rolling."

The biggest concession, perhaps, involved the "dream clause" in the artist's contract. As Pérez initially weighed CrossGen's proposal, Joe Quesada—recently ascended to the editor-in-chief's position at the House of Ideas—spoke about making the revival of *JLA/Avengers* one of Marvel's top priorities.

Pérez was torn. He could either accept CrossGen's contract, in which case he'd have to give up working for Marvel and DC, thereby killing any chance of doing *JLA/Avengers*, or he could turn Alessi down and hope comics' "Big Two" could reach an agreement.

Both options, he knew, contained equal measures of risk and reward, but, if he had to decide, he knew he'd have to rule in favor of *JLA/Avengers*. He'd waited too long not to.

Alessi agreed. He still wanted Pérez at CrossGen, however, and, in an effort to ensure the artist could join the company without regret, the businessman presented him an alternative. He suggested Pérez establish a "drop-dead time" with Marvel and DC, a deadline by which they'd *have* to present him with a letter of intent for the long-awaited company crossover. If the letter arrived by the date established, Alessi promised to allow Pérez a leave of absence from his CrossGen responsibilities.

> *"George is just the master of being able to take 400,000 elements and lay them out on the page in a way that seems chaotic until you see all the design structure underneath it."*
>
> *—Barbara Kesel*

"He gave me the best of both worlds," the storyteller said. "Instead of having to make a choice, I got everything."

Pérez joined CrossGen and worked diligently on *Chronicles* while waiting to see whether DC and Marvel could hash out the details of *JLA/Avengers*.

On the date he'd set as a deadline—"on the last possible day," he says—the contract appeared.

Alessi lived up to his word; he granted Pérez a one-year sabbatical.

"This project is just too historic not to happen," CrossGen's founder said in a press release. "The fans want it; the retailers want it; heck, all of us here at CrossGen want it."

The biggest dream of the artist's legendary career was about to come true.

© CrossGen Comics

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IT'S YOUR CALL--WE CAN TAKE AS MUCH TIME AS YOU WANT. SEE WHATEVER YOU PLEASE.

The year was 1982, and George Pérez aspired to greatness.

He'd shown glimpses of his true potential on *The Avengers* and, after co-creating *The New Teen Titans*, that potential became more readily, more regularly, apparent. He and Marv Wolfman had made something out of nothing, turned a no-expectation title into one of the industry's biggest—and most successful—surprises, rivaling Marvel's *X-Men* both in terms of sales and popularity.

JLA/AVENGERS

Fans, as fans are apt to do, began to speculate. They started to dream. *What would happen if Cyclops met Robin? Mano a mano, who'd be left standing—Cyborg or Colossus? Would Nightcrawler's blue clash with Changeling's green? Could the two Logans, Gar and Wolverine, somehow be related?*

Comic executives, as comic executives are wont to do, decided to grant fans their dream...for a reasonable cover price, of course. And so, in 1982, *X-Men/New Teen Titans* #1 hit the stands, officially introducing Marvel's Merry Mutants to DC's titanic teens.

The book was a smash.

Pérez had nothing to do with it.

Marvel produced the comic and, as such, handed the creative responsibilities to two of its finest, writer Chris Claremont and artist Walter Simonson. DC's turn at the helm was to come the following year with the release of *New Teen Titans/X-Men* by Wolfman and Pérez.

But the first team-up got fans thinking, had them dreaming—salivating, even—over other potential Marvel/DC crossovers. Of the lot, one fantasy reigned supreme: *JLA/Avengers*.

"It was *the* big fanboy dream," Pérez said. "We'd all wondered what Superman and Thor would be like if they met, Batman and Captain America, and so on."

Once again, comic executives, doing what they're wont to do, decided to grant fans their wish. This time, however, Pérez would be one of the creative genies.

JLA/Avengers would team the artist, who could boast having worked on both super-team titles, with Gerry Conway, a writer who could make a similar claim. Together, the duo would—for the first time—unite the biggest stars of two comic universes.

"When I first went to Marvel, it was the hope I would get to do the *Avengers*; when I was offered work at DC, it was with the proviso I get to draw the Justice League at least once," Pérez explains. "*JLA/Avengers* would be like doing all the major comic books of both companies in one."

Conway sent his plot to DC for review by editor Len Wein and Vice President/Executive Editor Dick Giordano. In it, Kang and the Lord of Time attempted to reset history from its very beginning and play a game to determine in whose image the universe will be created. The two villains would each pick a team of champions responsible for collecting items called the "Eggs of Time" from their hiding places throughout history. Kang chose the Avengers, the Lord of Time picks the JLA.

The two teams were to break up into smaller squads, which would then travel throughout time and space in search of the Eggs. Kang convinced his heroes that the Justice Leaguers were villains, a ploy similarly used by the Lord of Time.

The end result would have answered fans' persistent "What Ifs" Batman challenged Captain America (who, Pérez says, was to mistake the Dark Knight for his old villain Baron Blood), Wonder Woman went toe-to-toe with Hercules, and Green Lantern (Hal Jordan) battled Captain Marvel. Red Tornado versus Vision, Zatanna against the Scarlet Witch, Atom versus Ant Man, Flash and Quicksilver—Conway set up the battles and decided their outcomes.

Giordano gave Wein his approval, and the editor told Pérez to begin penciling the crossover. The artist, who'd been hungering to receive the official OK, eagerly dove into the work.

He finished 21 pages before receiving the order to stop.

Marvel's editor-in-chief, Jim Shooter, had rejected Conway's original plot, which he said was laden with holes and continuity glitches, and had been awaiting a revised proposal. When he got word that Pérez had already begun penciling the book, he sent DC notice to cease work on the project.

"When I got the okay to start the work, even I acknowledged there were a lot of holes in the plot, a lot of things that didn't seem fully worked out," Pérez remembers. "But I thought I could work with it.

"When I was working with Jim Shooter on *The Avengers*, he had been a DC man, and I had filled in lot of the subtleties he didn't know about the characters as I went along. I knew the characters better, and I was changing things. I thought that was what was expected of me on *JLA/Avengers*.

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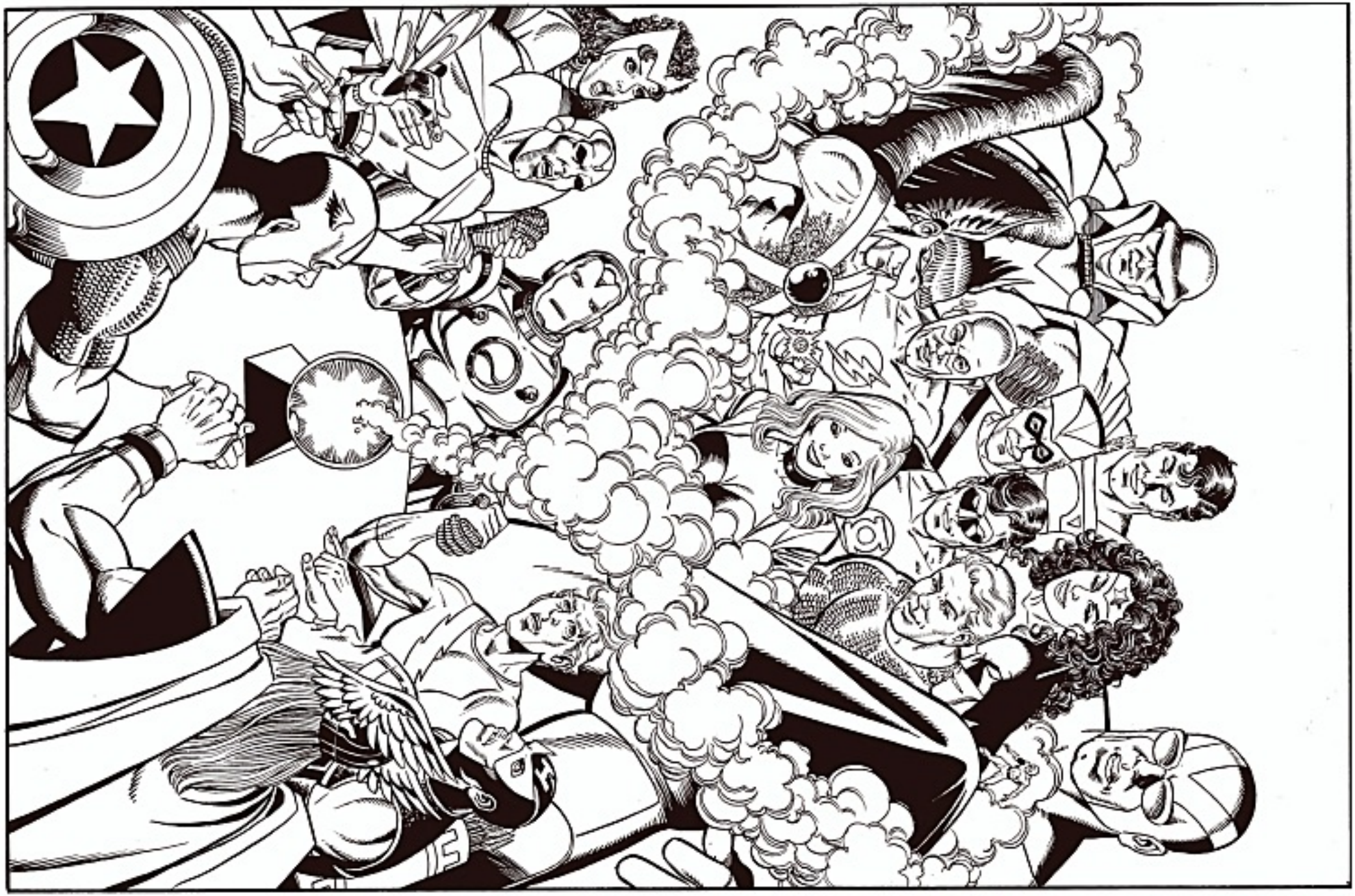

"When I first went to Marvel, it was the hope I would get to do The Avengers; *when I was offered work at DC, it was with the proviso I get to draw the Justice League at least once.* JLA/Avengers *would be like doing all the major comic books of both companies in one."*

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"When I found out the plot had not been approved, that it had not gone through the proper channels and that there were major concerns with the plot, I was given a halt."

Work never again resumed. The dispute between Marvel and DC escalated, eventually killing the project, as well as *New Teen Titans/X-Men*.

For the longest time, Pérez blamed Shooter for the end of *JLA/Avengers*, but he's since come to realize there was a lot of blame to go around. DC, he said, should never have given him the go-ahead to begin work.

"When Jim Shooter found out, he reacted to that, then other people reacted to Jim—there were a lot of people pounding the tables with their shoes," Pérez explains. "The artwork was held hostage, and, when I finally got explanations from everybody, I was too angry and too disappointed to see beyond the fact I was losing my dream project.

"In the long run, it was the fact no one was cooperating anymore; people were angry at each other. I took it personally when I didn't need to take it personally. No one was saying the artwork was horrible or anything. They just didn't like the story and how things were worked out. That's what killed it."

The book's cancellation sent Pérez into what he describes as a "very strong emotional downturn."

"My wide-eyed innocence toward the industry was shattered," he said, "as I realized petty squabbles could destroy what should have been a project everyone rallied around."

Seventeen years later, at the start of the new millennium, he found vindication.

Joe Quesada had been sitting behind the editor-in-chief's desk at Marvel for less than a week before pulling editor Tom Brevoort aside.

Quesada, who considers Brevoort one of comics' great historians, asked the editor a simple question: "Whatever happened to *Avengers/JLA*?"

The answer he received was slightly more complex, a tale of premature starts and unauthorized plots, breakdowns in communication and irreconcilable differences. The recap left the EIC with the notion the project ended because of "a pissing match between Marvel and DC," a match to which Quesada—in one of his earliest editorial decrees—declared an end.

"We just sat down with DC and said, 'Let's do this.' George isn't getting any younger, and the fans have been asking for this forever. Let's just do it."

Pérez did what he'd been dying to do since the early 1980s—finish JLA/Avengers. In fact, the artist paid homage to the earlier incarnation of the epic in issue #3 of the series, recreating the Avengers versus the Justice League cover he drew for the cover of Comics Interview magazine in 1983.

Marvel and DC worked out what Quesada called "a nice little deal," and—upon dispatching the requisite contract to Pérez—Avengers/JLA was finally, officially, underway. Each company would publish two 48-page issues, tentatively beginning in 2003, twenty years after the expected release of the original crossover.

"It was a dream come true," the artist said of the news. "And the political squelching of the first version made the idea of doing it when my creativity and talent had matured a bit even more enticing."

From a creative standpoint, the series would reunite the hit *Avengers* team of Busiek, Pérez (who would pencil and ink the project) and colorist Tom Smith, with Brevoort serving as editor of the Marvel books. Dan Raspler handled the editorial duties on the DC side, replaced midway through the project by Mike Carlin, who—coincidentally—had worked as an assistant editor on the original *JLA/Avengers* crossover.

"The reception the project received was amazing," Pérez says. "Incredible."

JLA/Avengers watchdog sites began springing up all over the Internet, messages boards dedicated to spreading rumors (such as the one suggesting the cast of "Friends" would appear in the mini-series), encouraging speculation about the storyline and inciting character competition debates. Fans wondered whether their favorite characters, such as the Great Lakes Avengers, would make the books' cast list (they did), and argued whether certain characters—such as Glenn Gammeron, an intergalactic bounty hunter who appeared in several issues of *Justice League Task Force*—should be considered members of the JLA (Busiek says yes).

Pérez understood the excitement. He felt it himself. In his mind, the stars had aligned, the Fates had grinned—he believed Marvel and DC were better suited than ever to capitalize on the epic *JLA/Avengers* was destined to become. For instance, production values in 2003 so far outstripped those of 1983, the artist knew the creative team could "do a lot more artistically than we could have 20 years earlier."

"It seemed like the right time and the right place," he says, "and I was in the right frame of mind to do it."

To say Pérez's enthusiasm abounded would be a Galactus-sized understatement.

"I asked him at the start which characters he wanted to use, and his instant answer was, 'All of them,'" Busiek recounts. "He didn't just draw everyone I asked for, he added more. The Titans weren't in the plot. The New Warriors and the Defenders weren't."

Of the artist's own initiative, all three groups *did* make an appearance in the series. It was a feat he repeated time and again, cycling through rosters and costumes of the two title groups, while mixing in the likes of the Squadron Supreme and Infinity, Inc., the New Gods and the Guardians of the Galaxy. In *JLA/Avengers*, Pérez seemingly found his ultimate project—a team book that teamed up superhero teams.

As in the original crossover, the plot called for a wager between two cosmic-level beings, a "contest of champions" that would determine the fate of two realities.

"Tons of characters, lots of majesty, pomp and power, cosmic threats, big sprawling action scenes, lots of locations and surprises, some intense character moments," Busiek lists. "How did this *not* play to George's strengths?"

As in the original crossover, Busiek's plot called for a wager between two cosmic-level beings (in this case, the Grandmaster and Krona), a "contest of champions," as it were, that would determine the fate of two realities.

The Grandmaster scattered 12 objects of power, ranging from the Wand of Watoomb and the Cask of Ancient Winters (Marvel) to the Spear of Destiny and Green Lantern's power battery (DC), throughout the paired universes. The team of heroes that collected the majority of the artifacts would be declared the winner, and the winner's sponsor would reap the spoils.

"I asked him at the start which characters he wanted to use, and his instant answer was, 'All of them.' He didn't just draw everyone I asked for, he added more. The Titans weren't in the plot. The New Warriors and the Defenders weren't."

— Kurt Busiek

The premise, sweeping in its scale, exhaustive in its reach, would likely have given most artists pause. Some—the intrepid—may have attempted rendering it, a few may have succeeded, but none could have excelled to the degree Pérez did.

He had waited almost half his life for *JLA/Avengers*, spent more than three-quarters of his days training for the task ahead of him. When he put pencil to paper to draw the first line, he exorcised a ghost that had haunted him since 1983. It was his shot at immortality. It was his obsession. It was his destiny.

"It was," he admits, "a labor of love."

Over the course of the two years necessary to complete the project, the artist sifted through a seemingly endless stream of reference materials, tracking down minute tidbits of information—such as the proper positioning of white boxes on Mr. Immortal's costume—to ensure he accurately depicted the dozens of characters he'd never before seen.

"The story was so universe-spanning that I got to draw a lot of characters that I didn't think were going to be drawn in there," he shares. "In fact, there were more characters that I drew in the 200 pages (counting covers) of *JLA/Avengers* than in all of *Crisis*. The last count was 580, and that doesn't even count the textual references that Kurt made.

"It was a monster."

Within the first 9 pages of issue #1, Pérez penciled Arkon and Thundra; the Thunderers of Qward; Ultraman, Power Ring, Owlman, Superwoman and Johnny Quick of the Crime Syndicate of Amerika; the Grandmaster; Krona; Eternity; Terminus and the JLA (Superman, Flash, Green Lantern, Batman, Plastic Man, the Martian Manhunter, Wonder Woman and Aquaman); as well as countless extras and the "Belly Burger" mascot.

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Six pages later, he added a dozen Avengers (Quicksilver, Warbird, She-Hulk, Iron Man, Jack of Hearts, Yellowjacket, Thor, Vision, Triathalon, Captain America, Wasp and the Scarlet Witch), Starro the Star Conqueror and legions of mind-controlled pedestrians.

Pérez was in his glory.

"It was a great kick seeing Terminus battling the JLA and Starro battling the Avengers," he says. "Both were good, but the actual first meeting between the teams—it's what it all was leading up to. That was my favorite scene in the series. That very first actual meeting of the characters.

"That's when I said to myself, 'This is it. This is *JLA/Avengers*.'"

Admitting there would be "no second chance" at the historic scene, Busiek chose to delay it for as long as possible, taking the fans' enthusiasm for the clash of the comic titans and using it to his advantage. He rushed nothing, preferring to allow the story—and the readers' rabid fanaticism—to build.

His partner was only too happy to play along.

"With the exception of one page, I avoided showing any of the characters from the opposing universes in the same panel," Pérez says. "The only exceptions were reflections

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"There were more characters that I drew in the 200 pages of JLA/Avengers *than in all of* Crisis. *The last count was 580, and that doesn't even count the textual references that Kurt made. It was a monster."*

—George Pérez

on Iron Man's visor and Plastic Man's goggles. Those are the only times Avengers and JLA characters appeared in the same panel until the big reveal.

"Believe me, it was a challenge. I had to choreograph things carefully so that the characters, the Avengers and the JLA, didn't appear together physically in any one panel—I didn't want to minimize that big, big meeting."

Each issue had its own "big moment." Several of them, as a matter of fact. Six pages into issue two, Busiek and Pérez tackled what may have been the most-highly

anticipated hand-to-hand battle in comics history: Captain America versus Batman.

In the 1983 matchup, Batman won—at least briefly. Whereas Cap, Pérez remembered, approached the battle with a "let the best man win" mentality, Batman's mindset was much more simple: win. Batman, the artist says, cheated, hitting the Star-Spangled Soldier with a gas grenade.

The second time around, things turned out a little differently. The battle took all of one page; 12 small, explosive panels. Pérez created a sense of drama, breaking down the combat much in the way fighters like Captain America and Batman would break down an opponent, then heightened it, pointing his camera into the calm, experienced eyes of the combatants.

The battle could have raged for hours—Pérez probably could have devoted an entire issue to it—but instead, after a dozen panels, Batman spoke: "It's conceivable you could beat me, Avenger. But it would take you a very long time. Tell me this, though—do you want to?"

"No," Cap replies. "You're not the enemy."

The same two heroes later supply one of the most nuanced, touching moments of the series, a scene in which Captain America, his face reflected in the glass of the case holding the late Jason Todd's Robin costume, connects with Batman on an intimate level when he realizes the Dark Knight has lost a partner, as he lost his sidekick, Bucky.

As Cap and Batman attempt to solve the mystery behind their meeting, the rest of their teammates—headlined by the clash between Superman and Thor—slug it out in the battle Pérez was seemingly born to draw.

"I knew Thor versus Superman was important," the artist says, "and so it became important to me. If I were to draw that scene again, another fight scene, further in the story, it would be important, but not as important.

"This was the *first* time."

It took the *JLA/Avengers* team a week to come up with finalized list of characters for the cover of issue three, a massive interactive montage that could very well have brought the series to a premature end.

"I developed an inflammation in the tendons in my drawing hand while I was working on that cover," the artist explains. "There was a point after the two-week mark where I was suddenly in severe pain.

"Part of it was because the cover was double-sized: the number of characters in there, the amount of detail that could be put in, and the position of my arm in order to work on a board that large. All those things conspired to start damaging my hand. I was having a hard time holding a pen or a pencil without being in pain."

Pérez, who's double jointed, grips his drawing implements differently than most artists, an idiosyncrasy he says probably compounded the stress on his hand:

"Just the sheer amount of detail I put in, it was bound to catch up to me, I guess."

Busiek—who has, himself, suffered career-hampering health problems—marveled at his partner's persistence: "Even when George had tendonitis, and his wrist was in pain every day, he just rolled up his sleeves and plowed on in."

Donning a "carpal glove," a flexible support sleeve designed to alleviate the tension in his arm, the artist did what he'd been dying to do since the early 1980s—finish *JLA/Avengers*. In fact, Pérez paid homage to the earlier incarnation of the epic in issue #3, recreating the Avengers versus the Justice League cover he drew for the cover of *Comics Interview* magazine in 1983.

The image was one of many in the series' latter half that dispelled the notion the carpal glove was, in any way, holding the artist back. If he had any difficulty with the apparatus, the struggles didn't register in his pencils, not in the brilliant encapsulation of 30 years of comic history he drew in issue #3, not when he rolled through the rosters of the Justice League and the Avengers in the series' finale. Eras changed with the passing of each panel; heroes appeared and disappeared, only to reappear a page or so later in a different, more modern costume. Pérez's research into the histories of both companies paid off.

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"With the exception of one page, I avoided showing any of the characters from the opposing universes in the same panel. The only exceptions were reflections on Iron Man's visor and Plastic Man's goggles. Those are the only times Avengers and JLA characters appeared in the same panel until the big reveal."

Busiek's favorite scene of the project appears just prior to that cavalcade of classic heroes, an episode that takes place the night before the assault on Krona's citadel.

"The camera shifts from person to person, and you get those last-minute conversations, those settlings of affairs," the writer says. "Not only do I think George did a brilliant job with it, but I'm very happy to have been able to write that bittersweet goodbye scene for Hal [Jordan, Green Lantern] and Barry [Allen, the Flash]."

JLA/Avengers debuted to great fanfare on September 4, 2003, generating an intense interest that carried through the rest of the series' run. Fans scooped up more than 200,000 copies of the first issue, "more than double what anyone expected," Pérez says.

The battle essentially took one page, rendered in small, explosive panels. Pérez created a sense of drama, breaking down the combat much in the way fighters like Captain American and Batman would break down an opponent, then heightened it, flipping angles and perspectives with the skill of a master director. Pérez furthered that comparison with one of the most nuanced, touching moments of the series, a scene in which Cap, his face reflected in the glass of the case holding the late Jason Todd's Robin costume, discovers he and the Dark Knight both truly understand the meaning of loss.

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"We just sat down with DC and said, 'Let's do this.' George isn't getting any younger, and the fans have been asking for this forever. Let's just do it."
—Joe Quesada

"It was a great feeling of gratification, of vindication," he elaborates. "I'm not the best person to be impartial about the project, but I think it was worth the wait. Because of the fan reaction, I think it was worth the wait for them, too.

"I hope they liked it. I was having a ball."

On a more personal level, the success of *JLA/Avengers* afforded Pérez a degree of financial comfort he hadn't experienced "in a long time." By the end of the 2004 calendar year, he was able to pay off all his debts.

"Free and clear," he exclaimed. "I almost felt ready for retirement.

"Because of *JLA/Avengers*, I got a nice year of enjoyment, so I could actually sit back and plan out what I wanted to do for the next decade or so."

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CROSSGEN: THE RETURN

Pérez's time was up. His one-year sabbatical for *JLA/Avengers* ended, and, though he hadn't yet finished the project (he'd work on it nights and weekends), the artist honored his commitment to CrossGen.

"I was not going to turn my back on them," Pérez says. "They deserved loyalty from me for all they'd done. I would not have had a lot of my success had it not been for Mark Alessi coming to me with the CrossGen proposal."

The storyteller returned to the entrepreneur's company in 2003, lending his talents to a new title called *Solus*. The series centered around a character named Andra Radiant, a girl with incredible powers and an almost-total lack of memory, who travels from world to world throughout the CrossGen universe seeking to piece together the life she lost.

Pérez drew six of the series' first eight issues before difficulties at CrossGen forced the book to a premature end. Barbara Kesel, who teamed with the artist on what was hailed as the company's "linchpin" series, described the situation as frustrating.

"We had wanted *Solus* to be one thing, and we were forced to make it another," she said. "It was created with the knowledge it would have a finite span, but the calendar moved up on us, and we had to end it sooner. "*Solus* did do what it was always supposed to do, however—it introduced a character who was instrumental in creating our universe."

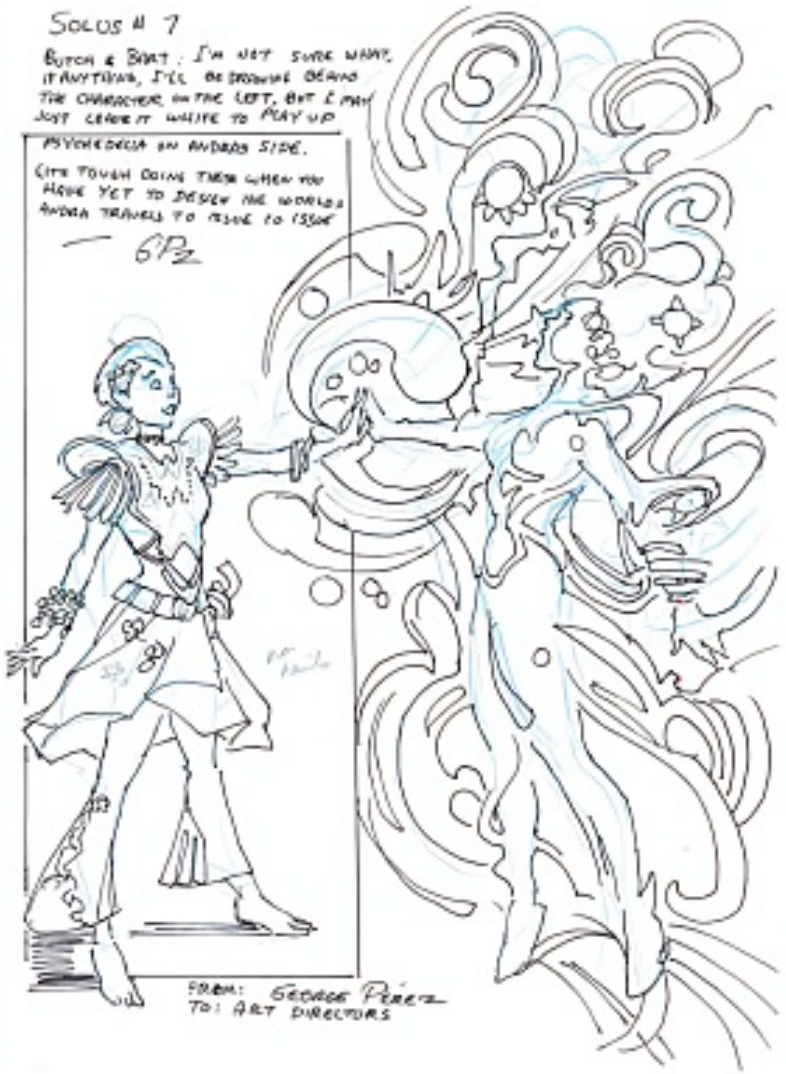
From there, Pérez moved on to a two-part *Lady Death/Sojourn* crossover, a project he assumed "because of my appreciation for what CrossGen had done for me in the past." The company began undergoing financial difficulties in 2003, and as such, Pérez opted to draw the Lady Death storyline for free.

"I could afford to do that, because of *JLA/Avengers*," he admits. "CrossGen had been very, very good to me, and I was enjoying doing the fantasy.

"It was great stuff, and it was a lot of fun."

Unfortunately, CrossGen's bankruptcy effectively killed any chances of the *Lady Death/Sojourn* ever being completed, and thus, with only two covers and five interior pages penciled, the project joined the ranks of Pérez's unfinished business, although this time without regret.

"It was just an unfortunate turn of events," he said, "but I'd gone through too much in three decades to let it get me down."


SOLUS # 7
BUTCH & BART: I'M NOT SURE WHAT, IF ANYTHING, I'LL BE DRAWING BEHIND THE CHARACTER ON THE LEFT, BUT I MAY JUST LEAVE IT WHITE TO PLAY UP
PSYCHEDELIA ON ANDRA'S SIDE.
CITY TOUGH DOING THEM WHEN YOU HAVE YET TO DESIGN THE WORLDS ANDRA TRAVELS TO UNTIL ISSUE
GEORGE PÉREZ
TO: ART DIRECTORS

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***Lady Death/Sojourn* unprinted pages** — *CrossGen's bankruptcy effectively killed any chances of* Lady Death/Sojourn *ever being completed; thus — with only two covers and five interior pages penciled — the project joined the ranks of Pérez's unfinished business.*

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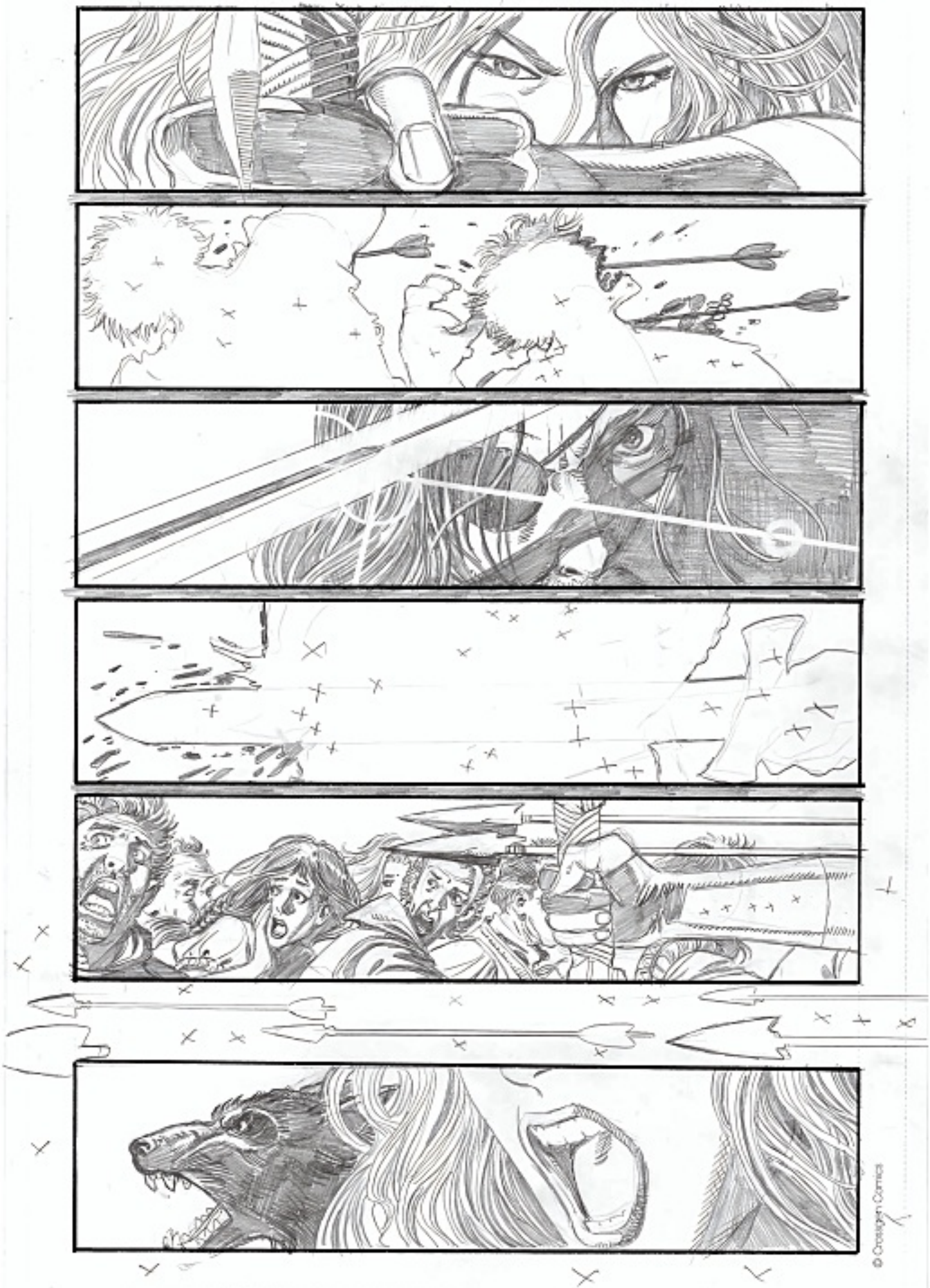

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PAUSING GAMES & GETTING BOLD

After *JLA/Avengers*, offers for Pérez's services flooded in. He could go just about anywhere, do just about anything. Comicdom was his for the taking.

He'd just resurrected one of the great unfinished projects of his career, turned it into the blockbuster success he always knew it could have been—how could he possibly follow such a feat?

By doing it again.

Pérez had been seeking something that could serve as a worthy follow-up to *JLA/Avengers*, something that—at least conceptually—could represent that kind of a high water mark, when his art agent, Spencer Beck, informed him a man named Michael Lovitz owned all the extant artwork from the *Games* graphic novel.

The news piqued the creator's interest. For years, he'd rebuffed Wolfman's inquiries about the project, rejecting his friend's every attempt to resurrect the tale: *No, thanks. The story's antiquated. So much has happened to the characters…there's no suspense.*

But times, as they always do, change.

"I rethought my position," Pérez said. "I'd already drawn more than 60 pages, and I thought starting a project where so much of it has already been done would make it a lot easier for me than starting from scratch.

"If we could make the story somewhat relevant, *Games* would be a worthy successor to *JLA/Avengers*."

Like *JLA/Avengers*, *Games* was a story Pérez began, but never finished. Unlike *JLA/Avengers*, the Titans graphic novel would follow the same plotline the second time around.

"The fans," the artist told himself, "would love it."

Lovitz agreed to return the artwork for publication, and Pérez called Wolfman to find out whether he'd be interested in playing with *Games* again.

"It was a formality," he laughs. "I knew Marv was going to say yes."

The writer didn't disappoint.

"I loved the story," Wolfman said. "I had been arguing with every single editor at DC since the project ended, asking them to give it to somebody else to finish—I just wanted to do it."

He remembered the project's beginnings:

"I was in the midst of a writer's block, but we were going to get together to talk about a *Titans* graphic novel. It made no sense not to do one. Books that weren't as popular as Titans by half were getting graphic novels. We wanted to do something to stand the test of time.

"I was going to meet George and Barbara [Kesel] at George's place in New York to make the story come together. I didn't really have a lot, and my view of my participation is that I have to come in with all the original ideas. If not, I'm not fulfilling my task as a writer. I don't mind if 90 percent of it's changed, but I want to come up with the inciting incident at least, the emotional grip of it, [the reason] why I want to do this story in 25 words or less.

"Suddenly, it hit me what the story was all about. It could be special.

"I pitched it to George and Barbara, and they really loved it, too. From that point, we just sat down and plotted like we did in the old days, this time with three people there."

The chemistry between the two Titans collaborators had been established long before Kesel joined the circle, and, having seen the duo at work, the editor suggested it was hard to tell "where one left off and the other one started."

"Marv set up the structure and a lot of the specific creative bits," she recalled, "but George met him halfway and ran with it.

"We all worked at a round table and threw out ideas. It was a different kind of plotting arrangement, because…when you do a comic, you're trying to do a story that has a semblance of being self-contained, while adding in enough threads that you can beef up latter to entice people in and carry them on to the next issue.

"In *Games*, we were doing a monstrous story that had to be satisfying not only for Teen Titans fans, but also something complete in and of itself, something that introduced the Titans to a potentially new audience, then wrapped things up. It was very much the go-for-broke story. It could be a little bigger, louder, more widescreen."

Wolfman called *Games* one of the strongest Titans' stories ever devised, "if not the strongest."

"It was not a big to-do like the Trigon story, which was just amazingly gothic and horrifying and huge beyond belief in terms of the implications," he said. "It was a much, much smaller story, but it was very personal. That's the kind of story I like."

When the plot was completed, Pérez began drawing, penciling the Titans as he always did and sending copies off to Wolfman. The pages, the writer remembers, were larger than standard, and Pérez took advantage of the additional room to increase his level of detail.

"It's probably the best the Titans have ever looked under him, which means it's the best the Titans have ever looked," Wolfman said. "He did things in *Games* that were mind-boggling. He had more room to play with."

Then Pérez stopped. Stopped playing. Stopped sending pages. Stopped drawing.

"He got to page 80-something, but he was skipping pages," Wolfman recounted. "I didn't realize that at first. I saw the last page was 80-something, and I wasn't checking whether every page was in order. He had never done that before. He never skipped pages. He

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always drew from page one on until the end.

"That should have been the tell-tale sign the assignment wasn't working. Had I noticed, I would have realized something was wrong. He was drawing the pages that interested him the most."

Wolfman believes Pérez hit a "Titans block" he could not break out of.

"It had nothing to do with a lack of love for the characters," he suggests. "It was just 'I can do this no more.' George had gotten to a point that, if he drew that curl on Kory's head one more time, he would have exploded.

"And that's as far as it went."

The project stalled. DC tried to convince Pérez to finish the assignment, but the attempts proved unsuccessful. His passion for the project vanished.

"One of the biggest mistakes made, which I will never do again, is allowing DC to pay me in advance," he said. "It's hard to get the same impetus to work on a book that you've already been paid for.

"Whatever the reason was, I lost interest in the book, and it was becoming anachronistic to the regular series. Now it was out of time, I was starting to lose interest, and I was doing way too much work and was getting burned out. It eventually just died away. Marv and I both got busy; we both got involved with other things; we just kind of let it float away. DC eventually stopped asking, 'When's it going to get done?' and just wrote the story off.

"That was the end of it."

More than ten years later, Pérez called up editor Eddie Berganza and told him he'd like to finish *Games*. Berganza went to Editorial Vice-President Dan DiDio, who, in turn, went to Paul Levitz. In all cases, the artist says, the response amounted to a brief "Okay, go ahead."

"Basically, everyone wanted to do it," Pérez explains. "It was an easy sell. I was the only one stopping the project.

"For the same reason that *JLA/Avengers* would never have gotten printed if I had said, 'I changed my mind. I don't want to work on the project anymore,' the Titans graphic novel has been lying in limbo, waiting for the day I would say yes."

Along with that eventual yes came an idea for the how; how he and Wolfman could bridge the gap between the Titans' eras, how they could take a story older than most of the fans of the Titans cartoon and make it relevant. By crafting a well-constructed framing sequence, by enabling the tale to offer insight into the state of the Titans at present, the graphic novel could become something other than a curio, something more than just an untold tale. Such significance was, the artist deemed, necessary.

"In order for the story to appeal to not only the core Titans fans who've been waiting for a decade and a half, but to those who are fans of the current run," he says, "I thought a nod to the current version had to be put in there."

As it turned out, though, that nod would never come. Neither, it seems, will *Games*.

Before Pérez could begin work in earnest, before delving once again into the lives of old friends Nightwing, Cyborg and Starfire, he signed an exclusive deal with DC Comics, a deal he says "doomed" the Titans graphic novel.

"*Games* has been put on indefinite hold," he informs. "And because of all the work DC's constantly offering me, I can't see that I'll ever possibly be able to get back on the project."

As Pérez explains, prior to entering into the exclusive arrangement, DC believed *Games* might represent his only work for the company in the foreseeable future and, as such, was happy to let him polish off his tale of yesteryear. Upon retaining the entirety of his talents, those plans changed.

"DC wanted me involved in the company's forward momentum," Pérez says, "as opposed to just dwelling in nostalgia. So it looks very unlikely that *Games* will ever be produced with my involvement, and, of course, without my involvement, DC has no interest in it at all.

"That said, I think it all worked out. Not necessarily for the best—it would have been nice to finish the project—but I do like the idea DC thinks so highly of me they want me to be involved in the new frontier. I may be the old general going up the hill, but I'm happy to be a part of the push."

The first two years of the exclusive deal offered the artist a number of "incredibly rewarding" opportunities, including the chance to ink one of his favorite artists (Jose Garcia-Lopez) on one of his most beloved characters (Donna Troy)—"All they had to do was call me up, mention Jose, and I was on"—and the opportunity to work one-on-one with another DC legend, Paul Levitz, on an issue of *JSA* (#82).

"I couldn't turn down working with Paul," Pérez says. "I've known him since we were teenagers, and this was the first time I'd gotten to work with him. It was a nice coda to our collaboration."

As for *Infinite Crisis*, the universe-realigning sequel to Pérez and Wolfman's original universe-realigning epic, *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, the artist wanted no part of it—at least not at first.

He'd passed on DC's initial offer to be involved—"It wasn't my book, and I didn't know what they'd want me to do or if I'd have the time"—and not until he agreed to exclusivity did he sign on to pencil the series' covers.

Then, when the editors asked him to do a few interior pages, he thought, "Oh, well. Why not?"

"Getting me to pencil five-and-a-half pages in issue two made sense," he says. "It was recapping the original *Crisis on Infinite Earths*. I honestly thought that was going to be it."

Not quite.

Through a variety of circumstances—the desire to keep his name attached to Crisis, the cachet his involvement lent the project, and the scheduling

problems the book faced when the original penciler began falling seriously behind schedule—Pérez found himself doing more and more work.

"Not only was I doing a lot more drawing than I anticipated, the drawings were very complex and being done with a deadline that was two weeks past already," he explains. "It was a very stressful time."

The stress was, in a rather strange sort of way, a curse of Pérez's own devising. The creative team for *Infinite Crisis* tried, in the artist's words, to replicate the original maxi-series without realizing Wolfman's original script wasn't nearly as dense as the final product would suggest.

"Marv didn't fill each scene with those multitudes of characters," he offers. "Those were added on as I drew them."

Writer Geoff Johns took a more directive approach, however, and populated his scripts with all the heroes, villains and other assorted characters he hoped to see, a roster Pérez laments "looks really daunting in text form."

"A double-page spread took three or four typed pages because it listed all the characters," he says. "I looked at that and thought, 'Are they crazy? How do they expect me to fit all these people in?'"

At that moment, as if on cue, the epiphany arrived.

"I thought back for a second and realized, were I to deconstruct one of my crowded pages from *Crisis*—describe the scene, put the dialogue in and list the characters—it probably would've looked pretty much like that," Pérez muses. "I never realized what I had created until I saw it broken down."

The project also reminded the Storyteller of how far he'd come: nearly 20 years earlier, *he* had been the artist who kept falling behind schedule, who couldn't finish what he'd started; now, he was the one being called in to help the fallen.

"The irony did not escape me," he laughs.

Though Pérez never intended to become so enmeshed in the *Infinite Crisis* saga, his participation provided him with something more important than accolades, something more profound than applause—it offered him a new perspective on his own career.

"*Infinite Crisis* made me realize how many landmarks I have been involved in with regards to DC history," he observes. "That's kind of a nice place to be, where I'm recognized as one of the DC architects, as opposed to just a journeyman artist. It's a flattering appellation.

"The fact DC wants to keep me involved means I'm just as vital to them now as I was 20, 25 years ago. That's something I relish."

Pérez will show his appreciation by doing something he hasn't done all that often in recent years—a monthly book. *The Brave and the Bold*, a relaunch of the classic DC team-up title, will represent the first regular series on the artist's resume since CrossGen's *Solus* and only the second since his career-rejuvenating run on *The Avengers*.

The opportunity is, in Pérez's mind, a wonderful example of serendipity.

"When I originally signed on for exclusivity, Dan DiDio was really gung ho on the idea of my working on the Green Lantern character," he explains. "I was either going to be working on the regular *Green Lantern* series or *Green Lantern Corps: Recharged*. I was gravitating toward the Corps, Dan was gravitating more toward my doing the regular series.

"When I heard about *Brave and the Bold* and [writer] Mark Waid's involvement, I was kind of disappointed. I thought, 'That could've been a series I probably could've done wonders with.' But Dan worked so hard to get me my wonderful deal, I would do as he desired.

"Then I received a phone call from Dan, sounding very apologetic, wondering whether—though he'd promised me *Green Lantern*—I'd be willing to drop that to do *Brave and the Bold* with Mark instead. Needless to say, that was the easiest decision I had to make."

Far from an ordinary team-up book, *The Brave and the Bold* will feature what may be best described as a "rotating lead" format.

"Batman is teamed up with Green Lantern in the first issue, the second issue will see Green Lantern team up with Supergirl, and Supergirl will end up teaming with someone else in issue three," the artist clarifies. "It's very flexible."

Such variability appears to suit Pérez's proclivities rather well.

"It's like doing a team book without doing a team book," he suggests. "I get to draw a new character each month."

Though the fanboy within him admittedly has characters he'd like to see in the pages of *The Brave and the Bold*—the Metal Men and Zatanna among them—Pérez will be perfectly content sticking with the company's A-list heroes for a while, especially if those A-listers include a certain Amazon princess.

"I wouldn't mind taking another crack at Wonder Woman," he acknowledges. "It would be nice to draw her again."

And while penciling a monthly series entails more than a measure of dedication, time and hard work, Pérez can't help but take a few seconds to contemplate his long-held dream of drawing the Legion of Super-Heroes.

"It seems almost criminal that, in my career, I have never drawn the Legion in their own book," he says. "They've guest-starred in other series, particularly *Crisis*, and I did do *Legion* covers back in the early 80s, but never have I actually drawn the Legion. It's ironic, considering they were among my favorite characters when I was a kid."

Oddly enough, that fantasy—combined with the fact the Legion editors are trying to put together a project for

the artist to pencil—snaps Pérez back to reality.

"First things first," he says, resolutely. "Let me get *Brave and the Bold* done. All this stuff DC does to tempt me…I'm in my fifties, and I'm being offered all these projects. I don't have to make any phone calls to ask for work; I just have to make phone calls to say, 'Stop calling me.'

"DC's giving me a wide variety of choices, and it's nice to be able to pick and choose," Pérez offers. "After more than 30 years, I'm at the top of the A-list.

"You can't ask for better than that."

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III

EPILOGUE

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"I firmly believe everyone has a right to express their opinion, to print what they want to. You may not like it; Lord knows there's a lot of stuff out there—including some of the stuff the CBLDF has defended—that I personally find abhorrent or totally disagree with, but those people have the right to print it. Our country was based on freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and my involvement with CBLDF—and my recognition by the CBLDF—was a major coup for them and flattering for me."

George Pérez believes in giving back. Giving back to the fans, giving back to his predecessors and giving back to the medium that, for more than 30 years, has been his home.

"The power to be able to make a difference with my name—the fact my name will give a certain legitimacy to an organization—it's a way of carving my place in comics history in stone," he says. "It's quite a heavy responsibility, but so be it. If I can be of help because my name means something, then I'm glad I worked so hard to build up that name."

The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund honored Pérez with its Defender of Liberty Award in April 2000, recognizing his "outstanding efforts to promote and protect free speech in the comics community." For years, the artist has donated every cent of the money he earns doing sketches at comic book conventions to various charity organizations. For the CBLDF alone, he's raised over $15,000.

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Of all the artists who've volunteered their time on behalf of the comic rights organization, Pérez—who works almost exclusively in mainstream comics—claims to be one of the few who's never been in a situation that would require the CBLDF's assistance.

"I'm not an edgy creator," he says. "I'm very, very much a mainstream guy, yet I'm at the forefront of making sure people understood what the CBLDF is for and why the industry needs it.

"When I got involved, it gave a greater legitimacy to the CBLDF in the eyes of the fan public because of who I am, because of my place in the industry."

The artist also serves as co-chairman of the disbursement board of ACTOR (A Commitment To Our Roots), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping comic book veterans by providing financial aid to creators who may need operations, life necessities or a helping hand back into the industry.

"I've had a successful career because of the efforts of those artists, writers and creators who preceded me," Pérez says. "I've been very lucky, and I'm trying to help those who made it possible for me to live the life I live."

The storyteller considers his achievements with groups like the CBLDF and ACTOR more significant than his artistic accomplishments within the medium: "If I can help the creator community in any respect, it's probably an achievement of much longer standing than my having the hottest book of any given year. The fact that other people might be helped, influenced or benefited from my efforts—that, I hope, is going to be my legacy."

For fans, Pérez's legacy will be one of entertainment, of inspiration, of kindness.

"You never take a fan for granted," he says. "You have to appreciate every single one. We've gotten so small as an industry, and everybody knows so much about what's going on inside the industry, that you really can't afford the primadonna game. You really have to treat the fans with the respect you, in turn, expect from them. Your work and your manner are something that now people are going to associate with the final product.

"I try to be respectful. I try to be a nice guy. I want my mom not only to be proud of me as a comic book artist, of the career I have; I want her to be proud of the man she raised. It is important to me that I give good karma.

"I'm grateful for people like Sheldon Moldoff (one of the great Golden-Agers) who came up to me and said he considered me one of the best goodwill ambassadors the industry has. That was such an incredible compliment to receive from a man who'd been in the industry, who'd seen its ups and downs, since the 1940s.

George Pérez, New York City 2003

"What an honor. What a mantle to wear. I said, yes. If I want to be anything, I'd love to be a goodwill ambassador. I want people to know I love comics. I love the industry. I love what I'm doing. I love dealing with fans when they like my work, and, when they don't like my work, I'm finally old enough not to let it hurt my

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feelings. The fact is, if I do the best I can, I'm hoping enough people will say, 'Wow. This is fun.'"

Fans have approached Pérez at conventions and shared stories about how they've been inspired by his work. He's heard tales of people becoming doctors and police officers because of the desire to help others they found reading comic books he'd drawn, and he's volunteered his time for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, an organization that grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions.

"A little boy wished to meet me," he says. "You don't do those types of things, experience those types of things, without feeling a sense of importance in what you do. I am just a comic book artist. I'm not a rocket scientist or a politician or a doctor, but in my small way, I seem to influence other people who, hopefully, will have a greater benefit to mankind than I do."

It's a little chain of events, perhaps, but for a kid from the South Bronx who grew up wanting only to draw, being part of such a chain is a major accomplishment.

"It's a nice thing to be linked to," he says. "It's nice that people—total strangers from different parts of the world—come to me to say I've made a difference in their lives, however tangentially, however subtly.

"It's a great feeling, and not a responsibility I take all that lightly. I try to do the best I can and let the chips fall where they may."

For as long as he's able, Pérez will continue to illustrate comics because of the impact his images can have on people, and because it's what he loves to do.

"I'm a guy who just loves to tell stories," he says. "I love to draw—I can't imagine my life without it.

"I want to die with an unfinished picture on my drawing board. Even if I'm not drawing something that's going to be printed, I want to be drawing until my dying day—it would mean I would have died doing what I loved."

Pérez's career spans more than three decades, 30 years of unforgettable images, jaw-dropping scenes and lifelike characters. For his work, he's garnered

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applause, won accolades and earned the respect and admiration of his peers:

"George has been a powerful and major force with his storytelling, his commitment to good drawing, and his intelligence," says Roy Thomas.

"George is going to be considered one of the best artists in comics. That's just the way it's going to be," says Marv Wolfman. "He's one of the few who's remained as good as he's ever been, if not gotten better."

"George has been one of the top artists in the industry at some point in the decade for each of the past four decades," Kurt Busiek offers. "Who else can say that? Jack Kirby? Joe Kubert?

"The new hot artists in the industry are inspired by guys George inspired in the first place. And George is still right there along with them, showing them all how it's done.

"That's impact."

To hear it from his colleagues, the storyteller's made a mark in comics like few others, yet—while he appreciates their kind words—he won't allow them to sink in. He holds on to a "little bit of insecurity" to prevent him from ever becoming complacent. He still believes he has to be better than he was the issue before, he still believes enthusiasm is essential to a long lasting career—and he still hopes the remainder of his career will be long lasting.

He's grateful there are so many writers who still want to work with him, so many creative minds that want to tempt him with new ideas.

"Let them come," he says. "Let them come up with something that has me saying, 'Oh my God, I didn't think of that. This could be very, very exciting.'

"The passion will take it from there."

George Pérez's love affair with comics has lasted almost 50 years. His passion still burns brightly, and now, more than ever, he's in a situation that will allow him to do his best work.

It's an idea that makes George Pérez smile.

© Just Smith

George Pérez.

The Man? Absolutely, and one of the nicest I've met in this business…

The Myth? Not really, George is also one of the most open about his art and his life…

The Legend? You're kidding…right? He's a LIVING Legend

The name George Pérez brings me back to my all-time, hands-down favorite comic book hero—The Flash (the Barry Allen version, 'natch)—and a back-up George drew way back when featuring his first ever DC Comics work (he drew the *Firestorm* back-up that started in *Flash* #289. As a Flash fan, this first exposed me to his work).

I was hooked on the *Flash*, and now I was hooked on George (*Firestorm*…liked it, but I'm sure George influenced that).

I wasn't alone either because from the very beginning, fandom was hooked on George Pérez, an artist who drew like no other they had ever seen. An artist that continues to impress and push his own boundaries today. I followed George around before he really broke BIG (with Marv Wolfman on the *Teen Titans*) but my inner fanboy still remembers vivid details of such early work of his like his *Justice League of America* run that featured the Ultra-Humanite—George conveyed the mischievousness, the lies and the Ultra-Humanite's facial expressions better than anyone else. Or that same run of *Justice League* featuring the Red Tornado on the cover…or *Justice League* #200 featuring League vs. League…or…so many others.

No one could have done any of them better, not in my mind.

I was hooked and hooked for life, but it was only the beginning.

When he and Marv Wolfman first started tinkering around on the "new" Teen Titans, I was almost there (*DC Comics Presents* #26 to be exact—and had missed it, and had to find one from the "back issues"—the days before TPB's helped so much). I remember fans back in the day talking about the *Teen Titans* for the first time…ever. And all because of Marv and George. They talked about the *Titans* being the best team book and to a *Justice League* fan like myself, this was blasphemy. But with Marv and George doing the *Titans*, they were right. George and Marv were magic together and again, it was only just the beginning.

I first met George back at a con in Philly. I had been doing the con circuit for a while, but actually getting to meet the creators—meeting the artists and the writers who made your favorite comics—it was something for a then wide-eyed pre-teen, even a convention "pro" like myself.

So, armed with not only all the DC Comics George had worked on, but all the Marvel Comics (*The Avengers*, *The FF*) of George's I had discovered (what I had at the time), I made myself a royal pain in George's side at that first meeting. His hand may still be cramped…

But he didn't mind. And if he did, he didn't show it.

George is a pro, and a damn fine human being on top.…

And remember that this was still all before the days of *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, before *Wonder Woman*, before his creator-owned work like *Crimson Plague* or his revival of the *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents*, before the *Ultraverse*, before his return to the *Avengers* and before his work at CrossGen, and before a little crossover a few people read (*JLA/Avengers*, you heard of it?).

It was only the beginning, but that beginning has produced 30 years worth of great, wonderful comics… the first 30.

When we first made plans to work on this definitive retrospective of George's career, I was more than a little nervous. This is a very important project to George, and to me as well. This man has been a friend for so long, and I've respected his talent for even longer, so we had to get it right, and I think you'll see that we did. From the all-encompassing face-to-face interview writer Chris Lawrence did with George, to the art that graces each and every page, this is a snapshot of George Pérez thirty years into his legendary career. The first thirty…

But the best part of working on this retrospective is knowing that we're only at the beginning.… George isn't even at the halfway point and we'll be there in another thirty years to cover the highlights of the next phase of George's amazing career. And that's something to look forward to.

Thank you George, thank you for the memories, thank you for the privilege…and here's to your next thirty!

Nick Barrucci
President
Dynamic Forces, Inc.

VI

GALLERY

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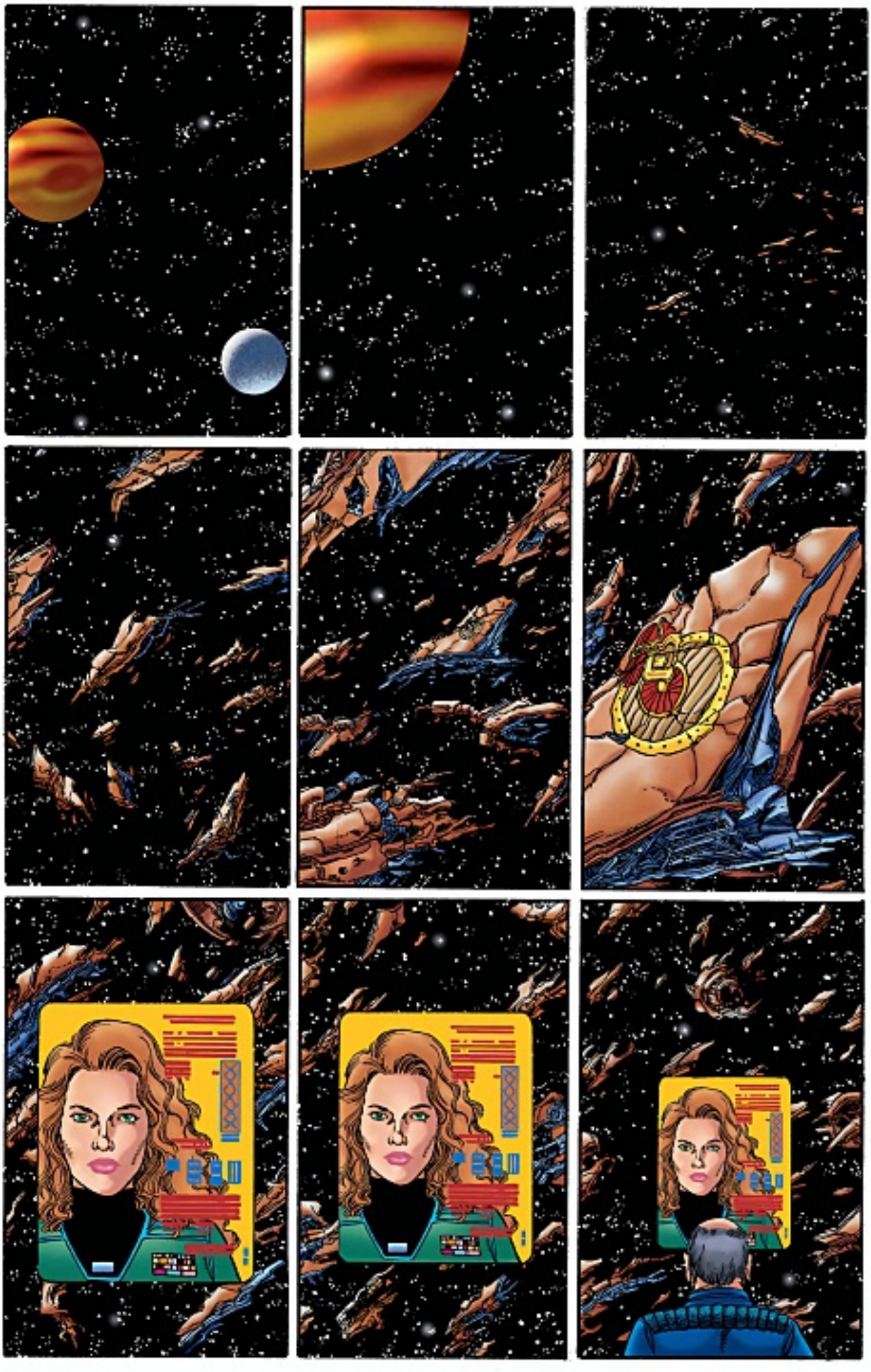
© George Pérez

The inspiration for Crimson Plague*'s Shannon Lower was a teacher Pérez met at a dance school his wife attended. "I was so knocked out by her beauty and figure (not an exaggeration in the artwork) that I asked her to model for the book. Currently, Shannon is pursuing an acting career and is filming in Europe."*

The following seven pages are the unpublished beginning of Crimson Plague *#3.*



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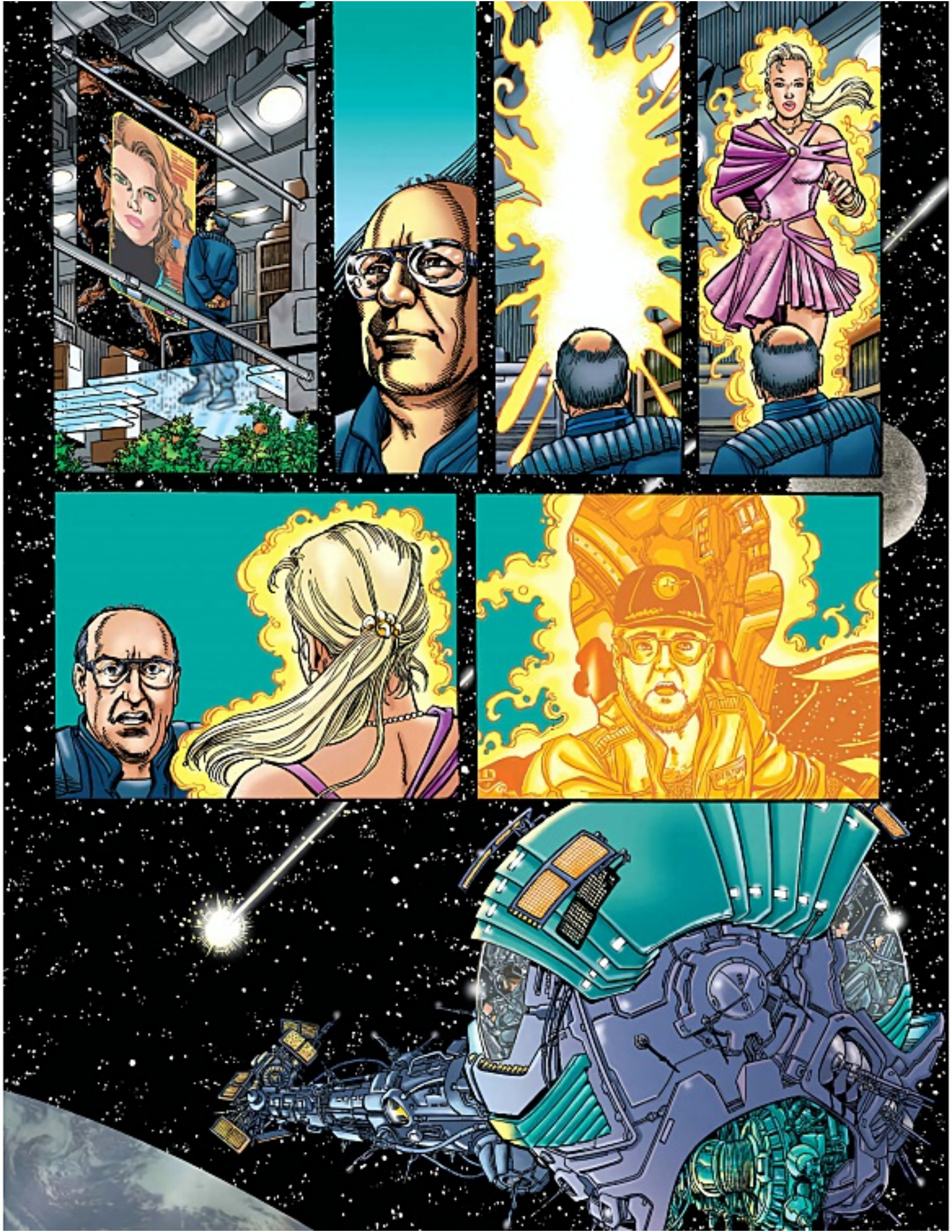

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PLYMPTON

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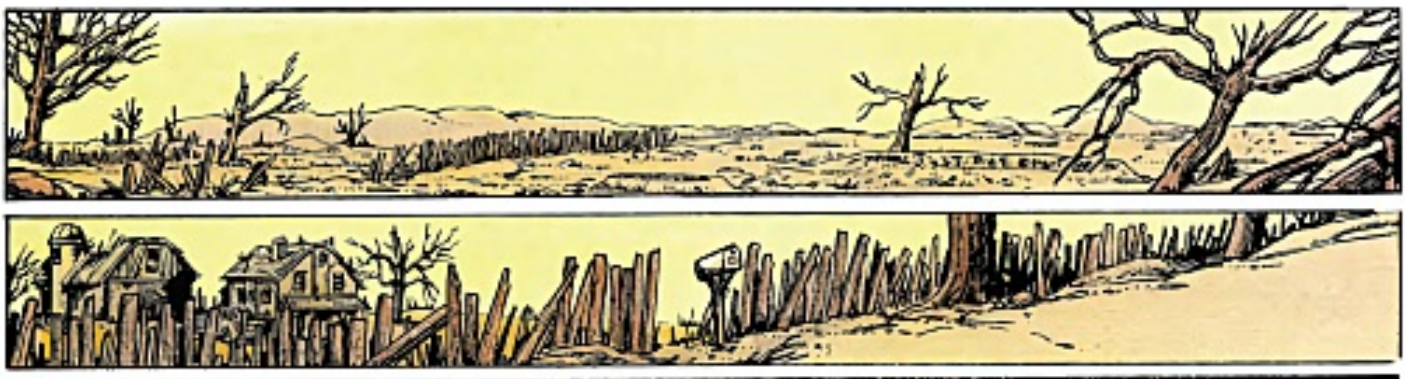
DARKMAN © 2006 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS. ARMY OF DARKNESS ™ & © 1993-2006 Orion Pictures Corporation.

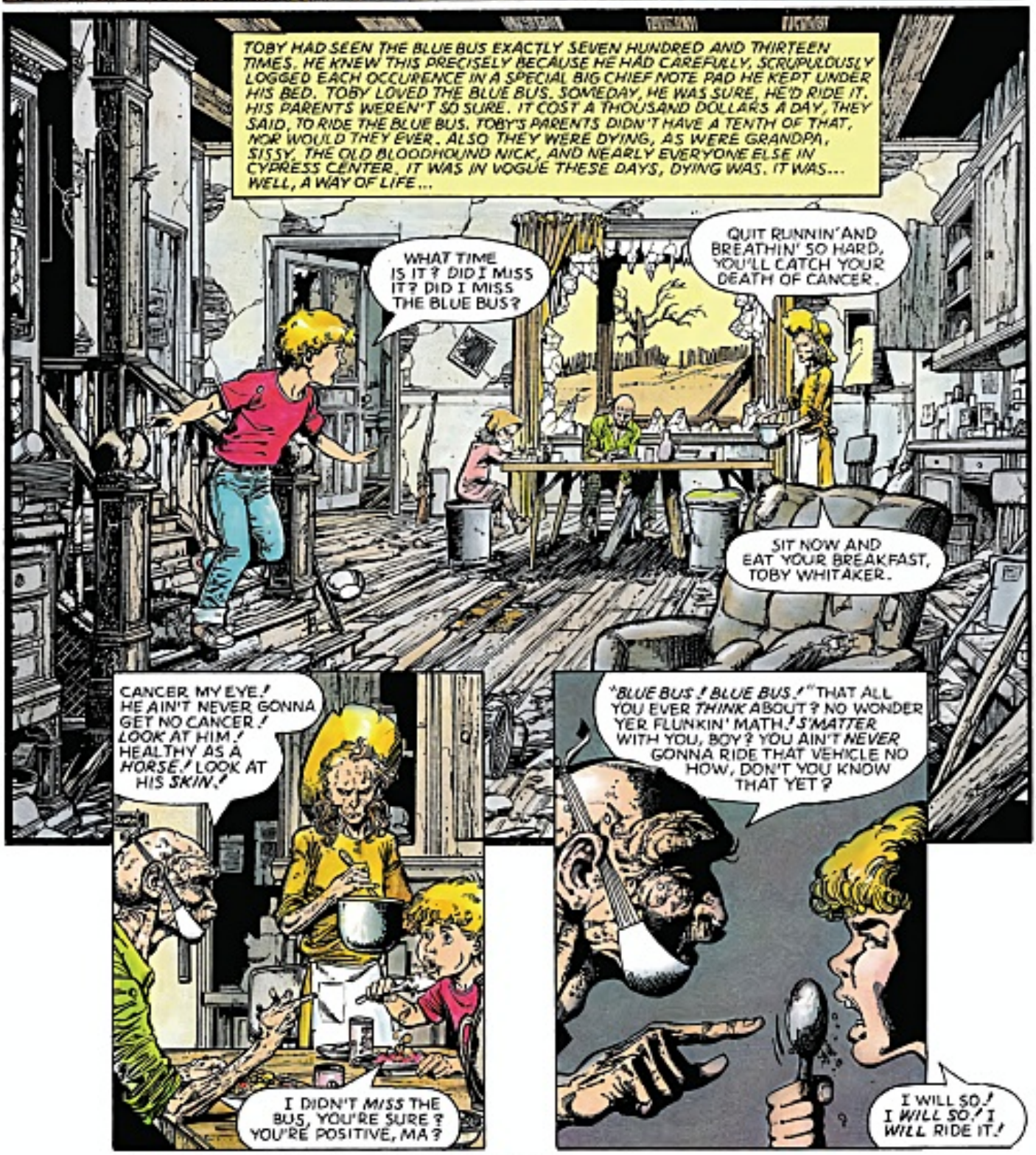
 Darkman vs. Army of Darkness *#1 Cover for Dynamite Entertainment*

Red Sonja #12 *Cover for Dynamite Entertainment*

Red Sonja ™ and © 2006 Red Sonja, LLC.

RIDE THE BLUE BUS

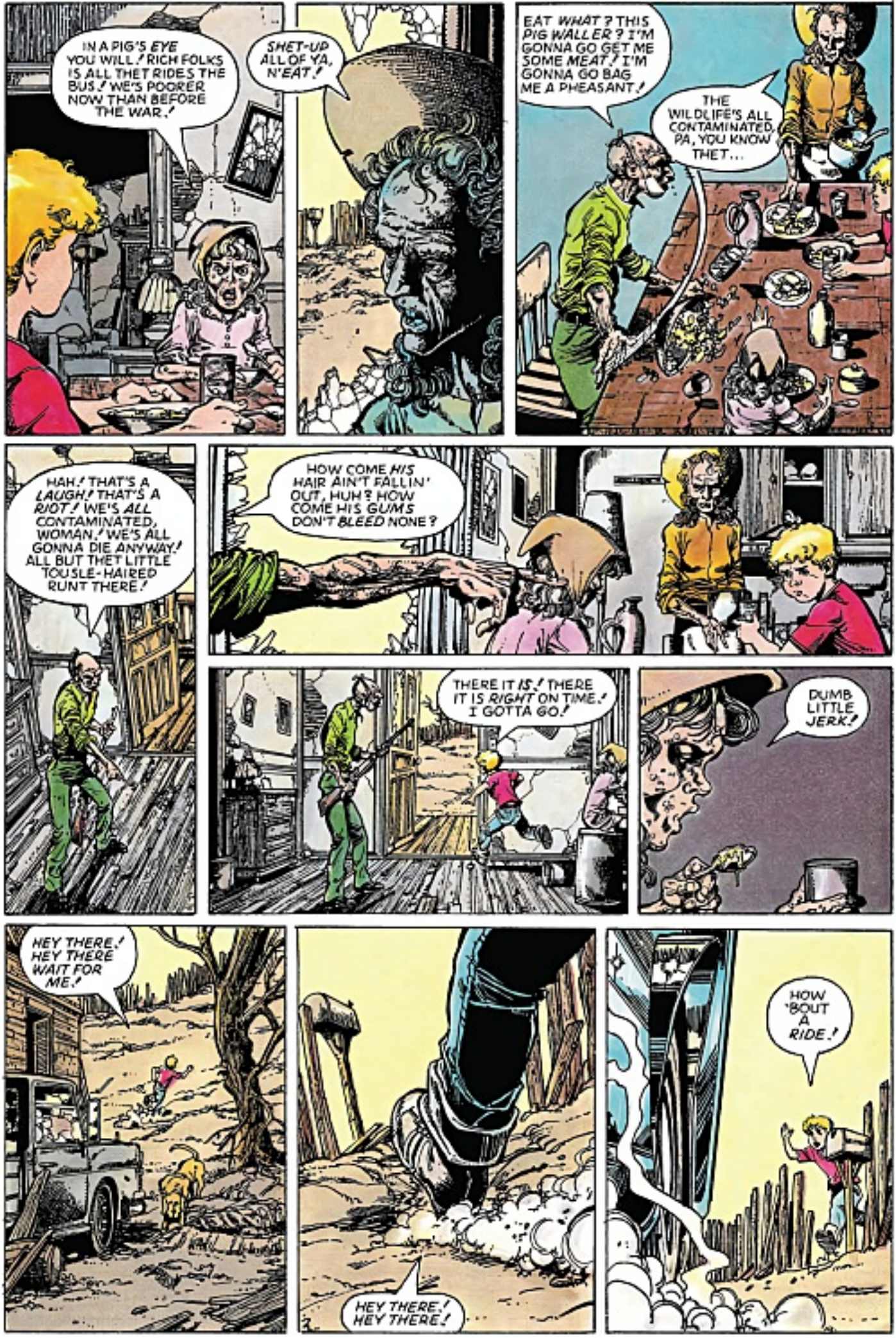


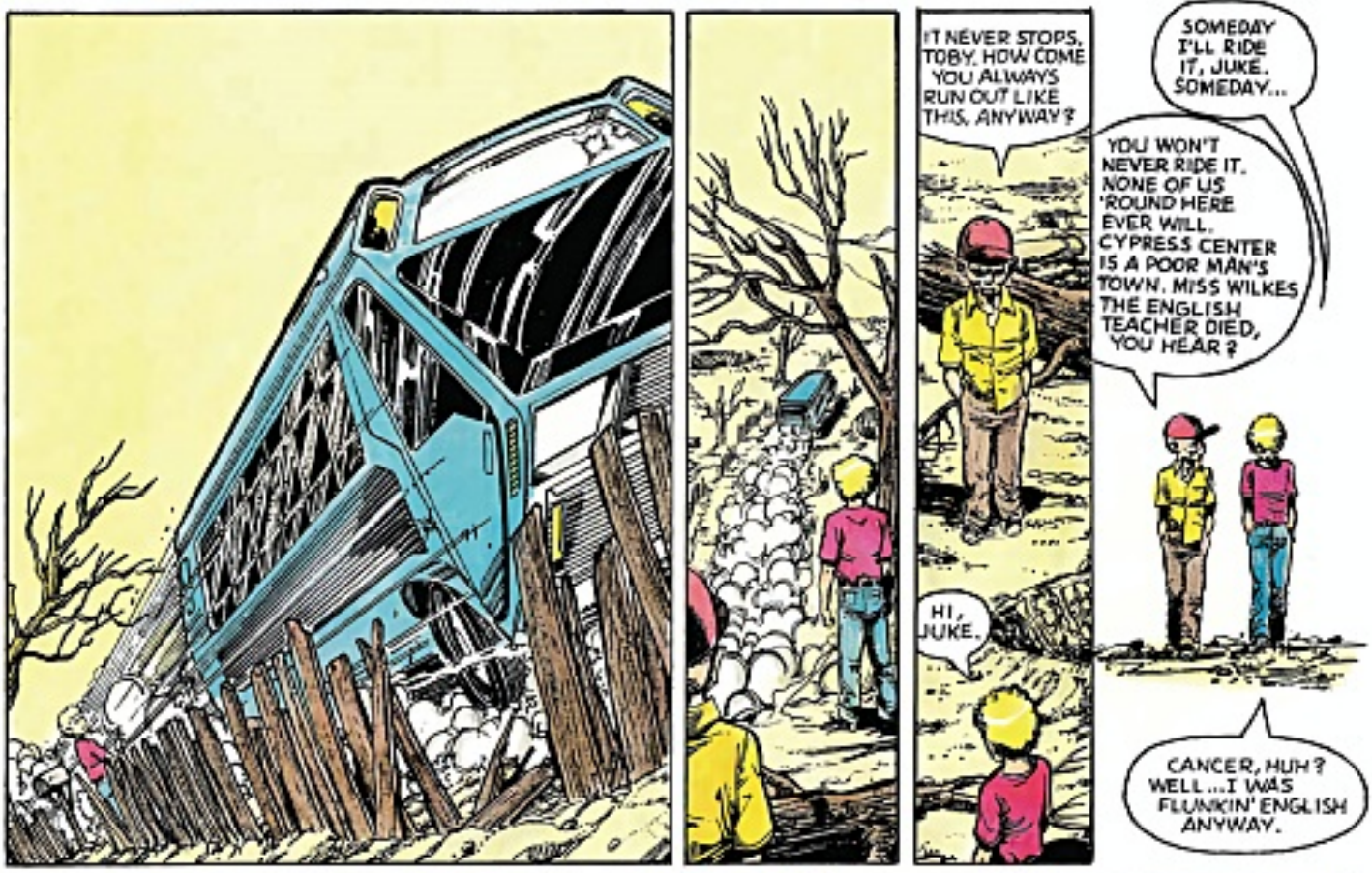

TOBY HAD SEEN THE BLUE BUS EXACTLY SEVEN HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN TIMES. HE KNEW THIS PRECISELY BECAUSE HE HAD CAREFULLY, SCRUPULOUSLY LOGGED EACH OCCURENCE IN A SPECIAL BIG CHIEF NOTE PAD HE KEPT UNDER HIS BED. TOBY LOVED THE BLUE BUS. SOMEDAY, HE WAS SURE, HE'D RIDE IT. HIS PARENTS WEREN'T SO SURE. IT COST A THOUSAND DOLLARS A DAY, THEY SAID, TO RIDE THE BLUE BUS. TOBY'S PARENTS DIDN'T HAVE A TENTH OF THAT, NOR WOULD THEY EVER. ALSO THEY WERE DYING, AS WERE GRANDPA, SISSY, THE OLD BLOODHOUND NICK, AND NEARLY EVERYONE ELSE IN CYPRESS CENTER. IT WAS IN VOGUE THESE DAYS, DYING WAS. IT WAS... WELL, A WAY OF LIFE...
WHAT TIME IS IT? DID I MISS IT? DID I MISS THE BLUE BUS?
QUIT RUNNIN' AND BREATHIN' SO HARD, YOU'LL CATCH YOUR DEATH OF CANCER.
SIT NOW AND EAT YOUR BREAKFAST, TOBY WHITAKER.
CANCER MY EYE! HE AIN'T NEVER GONNA GET NO CANCER! LOOK AT HIM! HEALTHY AS A HORSE! LOOK AT HIS SKIN!
I DIDN'T MISS THE BUS, YOU'RE SURE? YOU'RE POSITIVE, MA?
"BLUE BUS! BLUE BUS!" THAT ALL YOU EVER THINK ABOUT? NO WONDER YER FLUNKIN' MATH! S'MATTER WITH YOU, BOY? YOU AIN'T NEVER GONNA RIDE THAT VEHICLE NO HOW, DON'T YOU KNOW THAT YET?
I WILL SO! I WILL SO! I WILL RIDE IT!

Story © Bruce Jones. Art © George Perez

STORY: BRUCE JONES ART: GEORGE PEREZ

The following six pages were first printed in Alien Worlds #7 - Pacific Comics

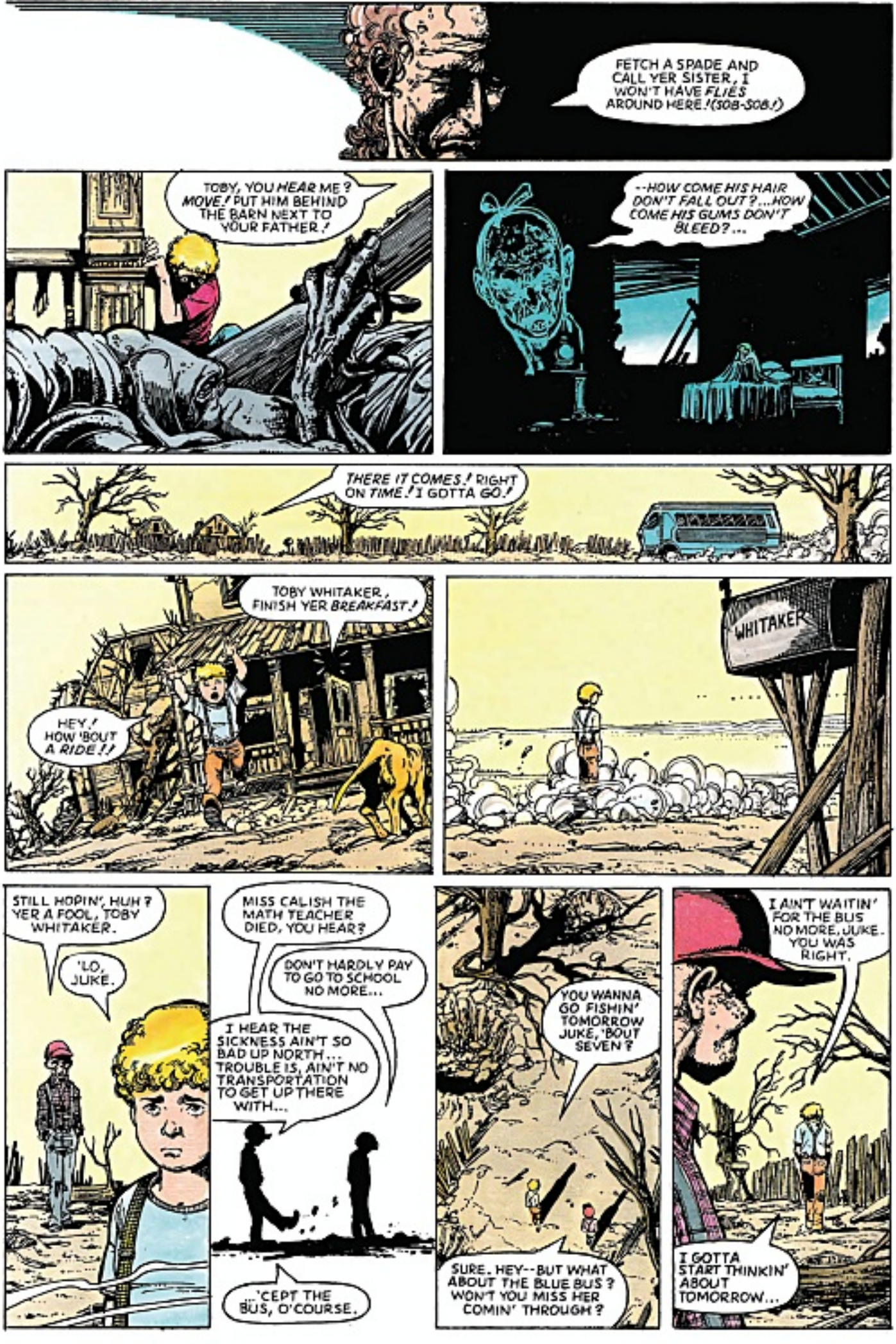

IN A PIG'S EYE YOU WILL! RICH FOLKS IS ALL THET RIDES THE BUS! WE'S POORER NOW THAN BEFORE THE WAR!
SHET-UP ALL OF YA, N'EAT!
EAT WHAT? THIS PIG WALLER? I'M GONNA GO GET ME SOME MEAT! I'M GONNA GO BAG ME A PHEASANT!
THE WILDLIFE'S ALL CONTAMINATED, PA, YOU KNOW THET...
HAH! THAT'S A LAUGH! THAT'S A RIOT! WE'S ALL CONTAMINATED, WOMAN! WE'S ALL GONNA DIE ANYWAY! ALL BUT THET LITTLE TOUSLE-HAIRED RUNT THERE!
HOW COME HIS HAIR AIN'T FALLIN' OUT, HUH? HOW COME HIS GUMS DON'T BLEED NONE?
THERE IT IS! THERE IT IS RIGHT ON TIME! I GOTTA GO!
DUMB LITTLE JERK!
HEY THERE! HEY THERE WAIT FOR ME!
HEY THERE! HEY THERE!
HOW 'BOUT A RIDE!

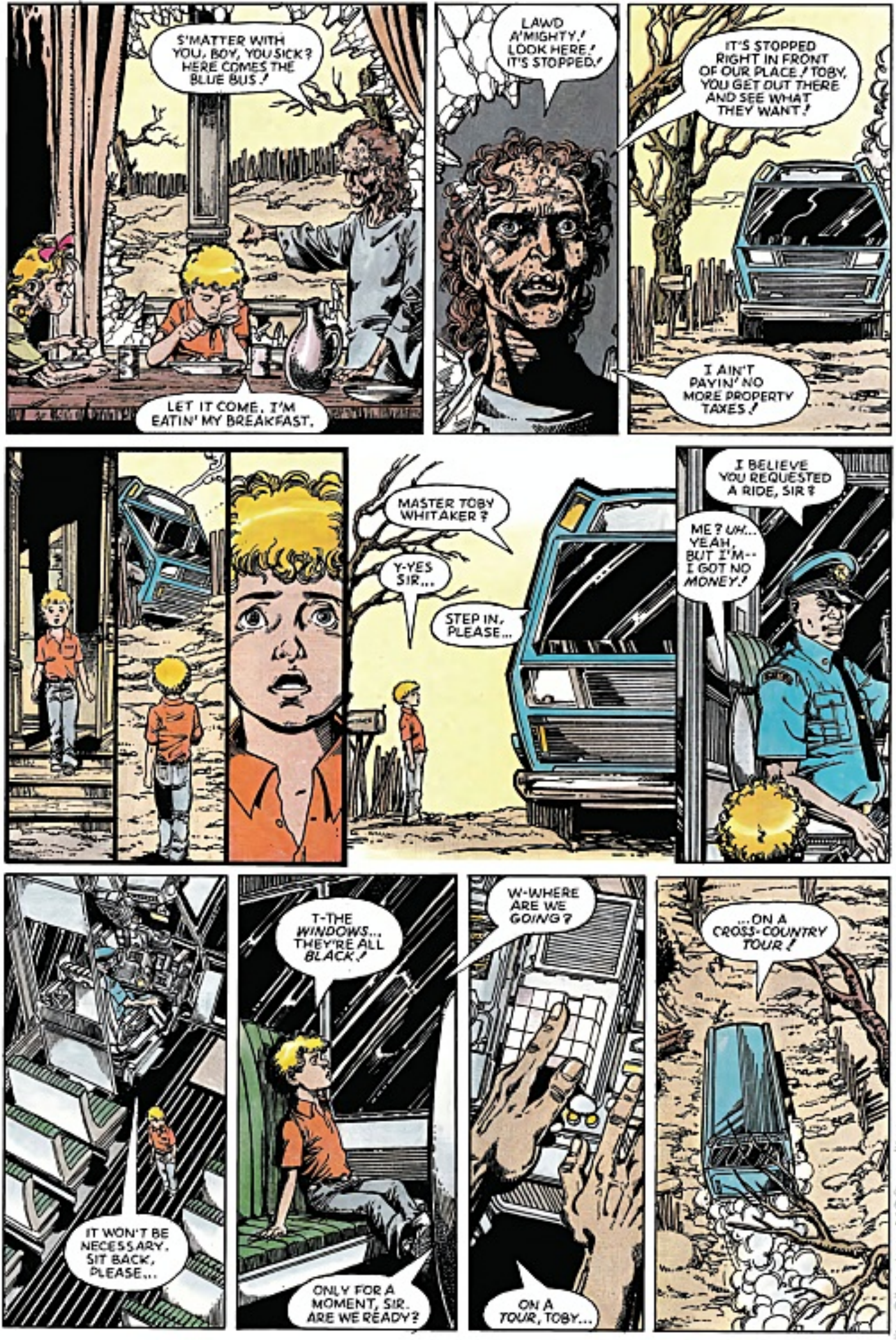

IT NEVER STOPS, TOBY. HOW COME YOU ALWAYS RUN OUT LIKE THIS, ANYWAY?
SOMEDAY I'LL RIDE IT, JUKE. SOMEDAY...
YOU WON'T NEVER RIDE IT. NONE OF US 'ROUND HERE EVER WILL. CYPRESS CENTER IS A POOR MAN'S TOWN. MISS WILKES THE ENGLISH TEACHER DIED, YOU HEAR?
HI, JUKE.
CANCER, HUH? WELL...I WAS FLUNKIN' ENGLISH ANYWAY.

YOU FLUNKIN' EVERYTHING, BOY. YOU BETTER QUIT DREAMIN' 'BOUT THE BLUE BUS AND START THINKIN' 'BOUT THE *FUTURE*.
YOU LOOK WELL ENOUGH TO MEBE HAVE ONE.
JUKE...YOU, YOU EVER HATE ME 'CAUSE I'M...*DIFFERENT*? 'CAUSE I GOT HAIR AND MY SKIN IS ALL SMOOTH 'N' SUCH?

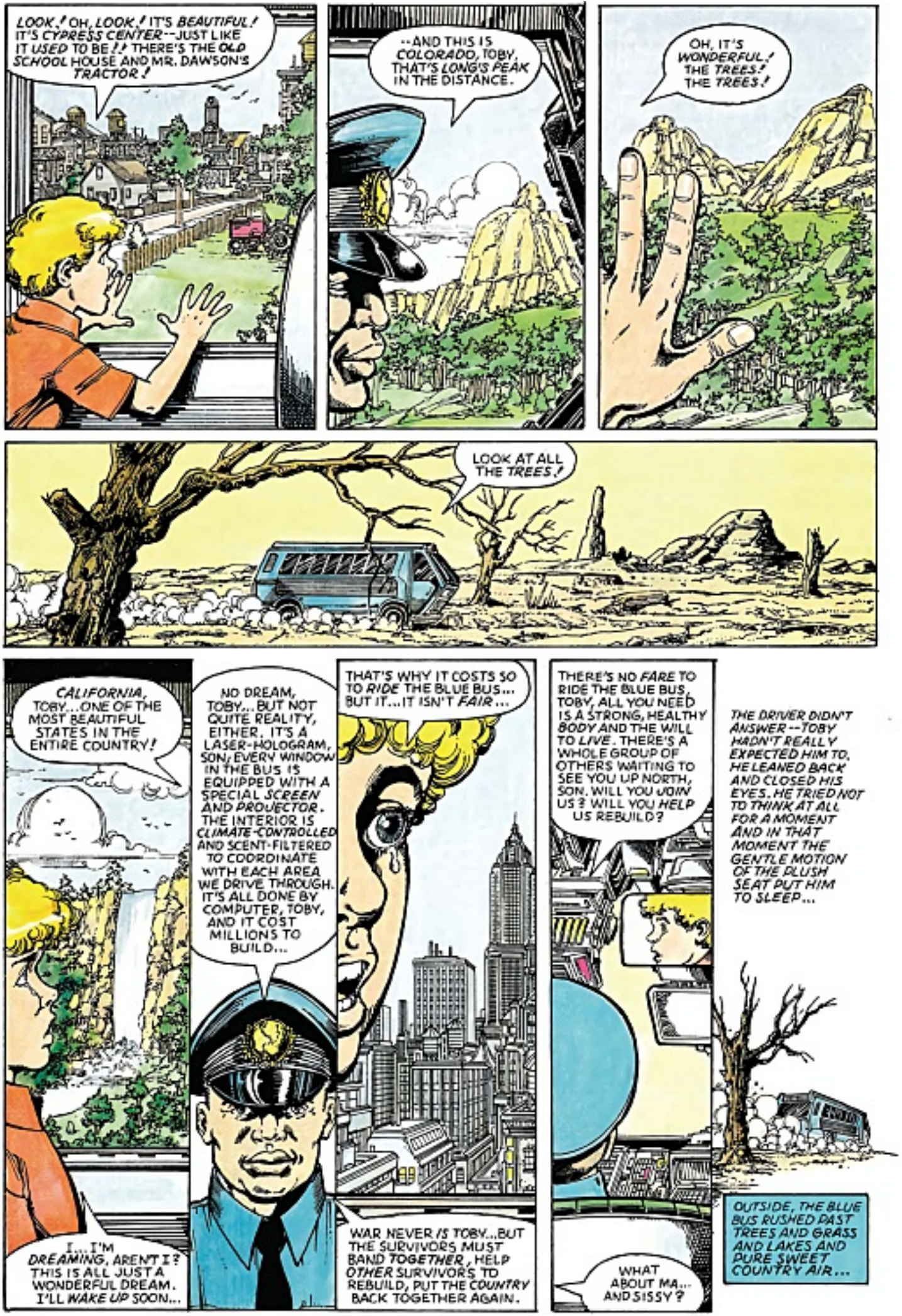
NAW, I DON'T HATE YA TOBE... I JUS THINK IT'S WEIRD, IS ALL...
KA-CHOW!
HEY! WAS THET A GUN? IT CAME FROM *YER* PLACE!
MA! MA!!
MA?...
DAMN OLD FOOL! COULDN'T GUT IT OUT WITH THE *REST* OF US! HAD TO GO THE COWARD'S ROUTE! NOW HOW'LL I GET THE CHORES DONE, TELL ME *THET*!

Story © Bruce Jones. Art © George Pratt


FETCH A SPADE AND CALL YER SISTER, I WON'T HAVE FLIES AROUND HERE!(SOB-SOB!)
TOBY, YOU HEAR ME? MOVE! PUT HIM BEHIND THE BARN NEXT TO YOUR FATHER!
--HOW COME HIS HAIR DON'T FALL OUT?...HOW COME HIS GUMS DON'T BLEED?...
THERE IT COMES! RIGHT ON TIME! I GOTTA GO!
TOBY WHITAKER, FINISH YER BREAKFAST!
HEY! HOW 'BOUT A RIDE!!
WHITAKER
STILL HOPIN', HUH? YER A FOOL, TOBY WHITAKER.
'LO, JUKE.
MISS CALISH THE MATH TEACHER DIED, YOU HEAR?
DON'T HARDLY PAY TO GO TO SCHOOL NO MORE...
I HEAR THE SICKNESS AIN'T SO BAD UP NORTH... TROUBLE IS, AIN'T NO TRANSPORTATION TO GET UP THERE WITH...
...'CEPT THE BUS, O'COURSE.
YOU WANNA GO FISHIN' TOMORROW JUKE, 'BOUT SEVEN?
SURE. HEY--BUT WHAT ABOUT THE BLUE BUS? WON'T YOU MISS HER COMIN' THROUGH?
I AIN'T WAITIN' FOR THE BUS NO MORE, JUKE. YOU WAS RIGHT.
I GOTTA START THINKIN' ABOUT TOMORROW...


S'MATTER WITH YOU, BOY, YOU SICK? HERE COMES THE BLUE BUS!
LET IT COME. I'M EATIN' MY BREAKFAST.
LAWD A'MIGHTY! LOOK HERE! IT'S STOPPED!
IT'S STOPPED RIGHT IN FRONT OF OUR PLACE! TOBY, YOU GET OUT THERE AND SEE WHAT THEY WANT!
I AIN'T PAYIN' NO MORE PROPERTY TAXES!
MASTER TOBY WHITAKER?
Y-YES SIR...
STEP IN, PLEASE...
I BELIEVE YOU REQUESTED A RIDE, SIR?
ME? UH... YEAH, BUT I'M-- I GOT NO MONEY!
IT WON'T BE NECESSARY. SIT BACK, PLEASE...
T-THE WINDOWS... THEY'RE ALL BLACK!
ONLY FOR A MOMENT, SIR. ARE WE READY?
W-WHERE ARE WE GOING?
ON A TOUR, TOBY...
...ON A CROSS-COUNTRY TOUR!

Story © Bruce Jones. Art © George Perez


LOOK! OH, LOOK! IT'S BEAUTIFUL! IT'S CYPRESS CENTER--JUST LIKE IT USED TO BE!! THERE'S THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE AND MR. DAWSON'S TRACTOR!
--AND THIS IS COLORADO, TOBY, THAT'S LONG'S PEAK IN THE DISTANCE.
OH, IT'S WONDERFUL! THE TREES! THE TREES!
LOOK AT ALL THE TREES!
CALIFORNIA, TOBY... ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL STATES IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY!
NO DREAM, TOBY... BUT NOT QUITE REALITY, EITHER. IT'S A LASER-HOLOGRAM, SON; EVERY WINDOW IN THE BUS IS EQUIPPED WITH A SPECIAL SCREEN AND PROJECTOR. THE INTERIOR IS CLIMATE-CONTROLLED AND SCENT-FILTERED TO COORDINATE WITH EACH AREA WE DRIVE THROUGH. IT'S ALL DONE BY COMPUTER, TOBY, AND IT COST MILLIONS TO BUILD...
I... I'M DREAMING, AREN'T I? THIS IS ALL JUST A WONDERFUL DREAM. I'LL WAKE UP SOON...
THAT'S WHY IT COSTS SO TO RIDE THE BLUE BUS... BUT IT... IT ISN'T FAIR...
WAR NEVER IS TOBY... BUT THE SURVIVORS MUST BAND TOGETHER, HELP OTHER SURVIVORS TO REBUILD, PUT THE COUNTRY BACK TOGETHER AGAIN.
THERE'S NO FARE TO RIDE THE BLUE BUS, TOBY, ALL YOU NEED IS A STRONG, HEALTHY BODY AND THE WILL TO LIVE. THERE'S A WHOLE GROUP OF OTHERS WAITING TO SEE YOU UP NORTH, SON. WILL YOU JOIN US? WILL YOU HELP US REBUILD?
WHAT ABOUT MA... AND SISSY?
THE DRIVER DIDN'T ANSWER--TOBY HADN'T REALLY EXPECTED HIM TO. HE LEANED BACK AND CLOSED HIS EYES. HE TRIED NOT TO THINK AT ALL FOR A MOMENT AND IN THAT MOMENT THE GENTLE MOTION OF THE PLUSH SEAT PUT HIM TO SLEEP...
OUTSIDE, THE BLUE BUS RUSHED PAST TREES AND GRASS AND LAKES AND PURE SWEET COUNTRY AIR...

Sin © Billy Tucci Crimson Plague © George Perez

p. Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti

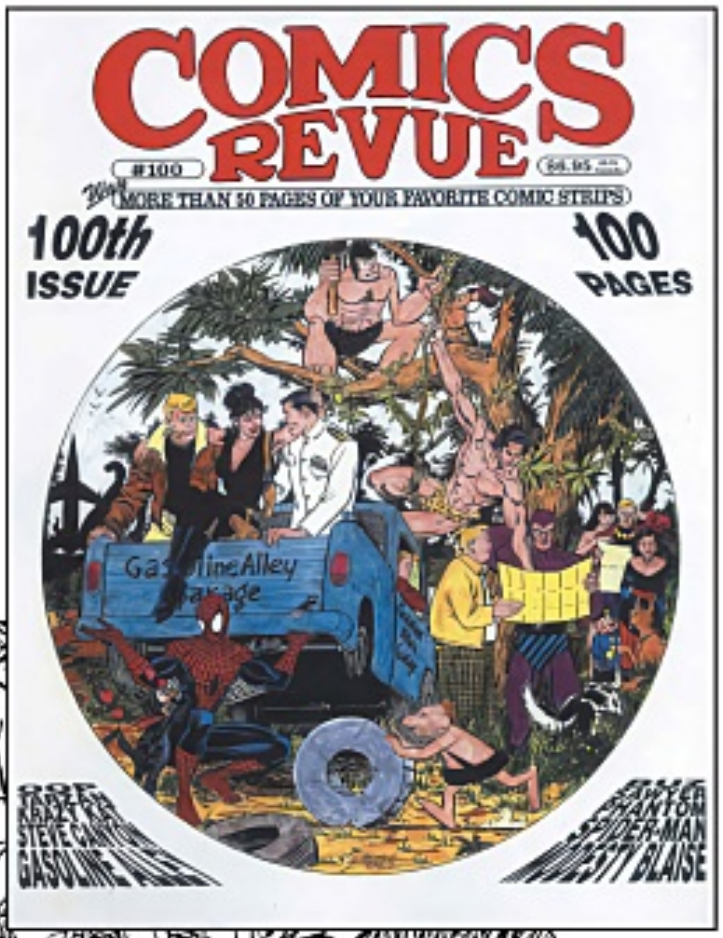
© George Pérez

© Marvel

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
JVLIVS
CAESAR
etc.
[CARVED IN MARBLE]

Pérez remembers working on this cover to Comics Revue *was "a real thrill."*

"I got to draw a lot of characters I never drew before or since. The exceptions were Spider-Man and the Phantom (whom I drew for a trading card). And, boy, wouldn't I love another opportunity to draw Modesty Blaise!"



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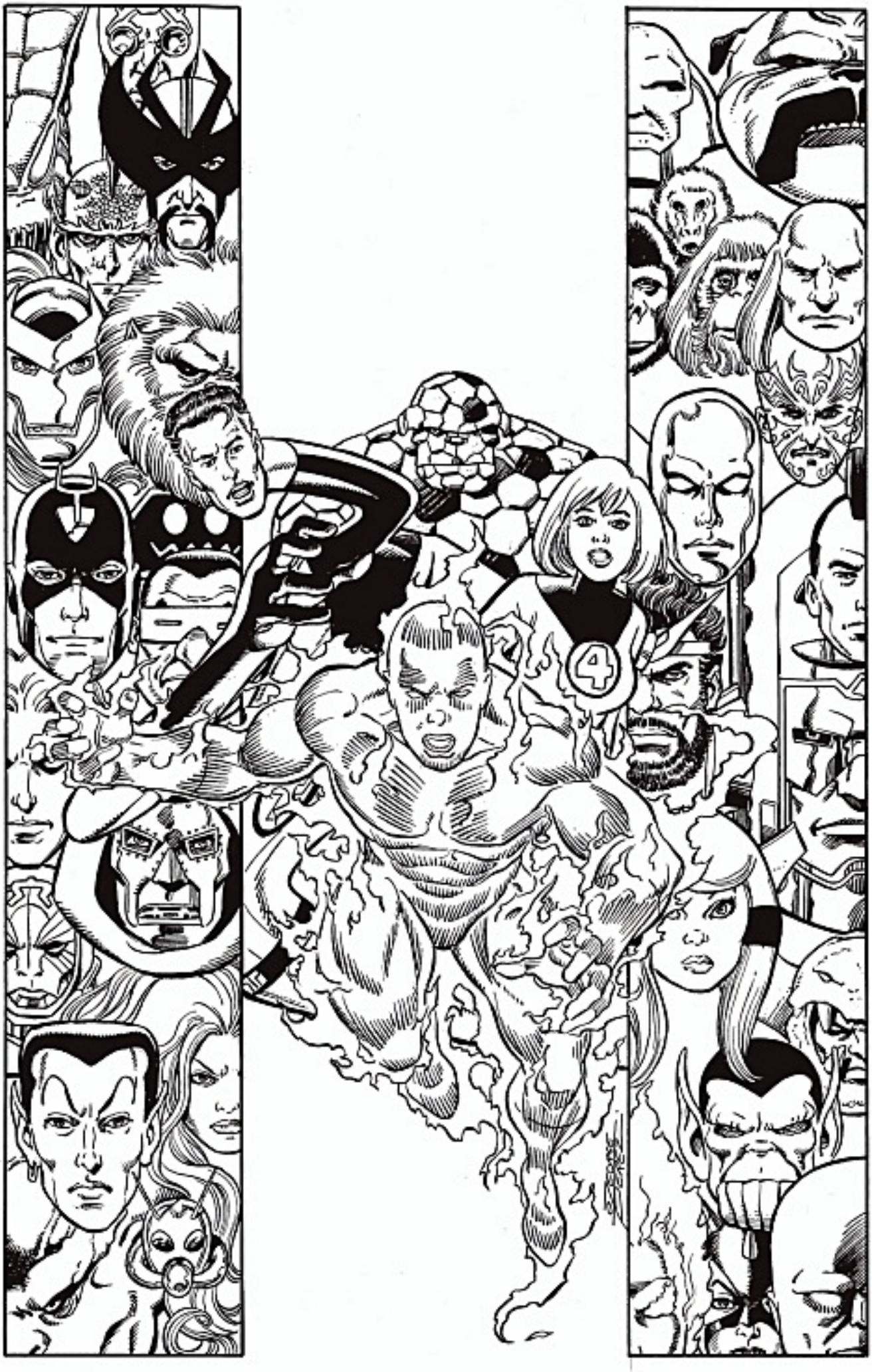
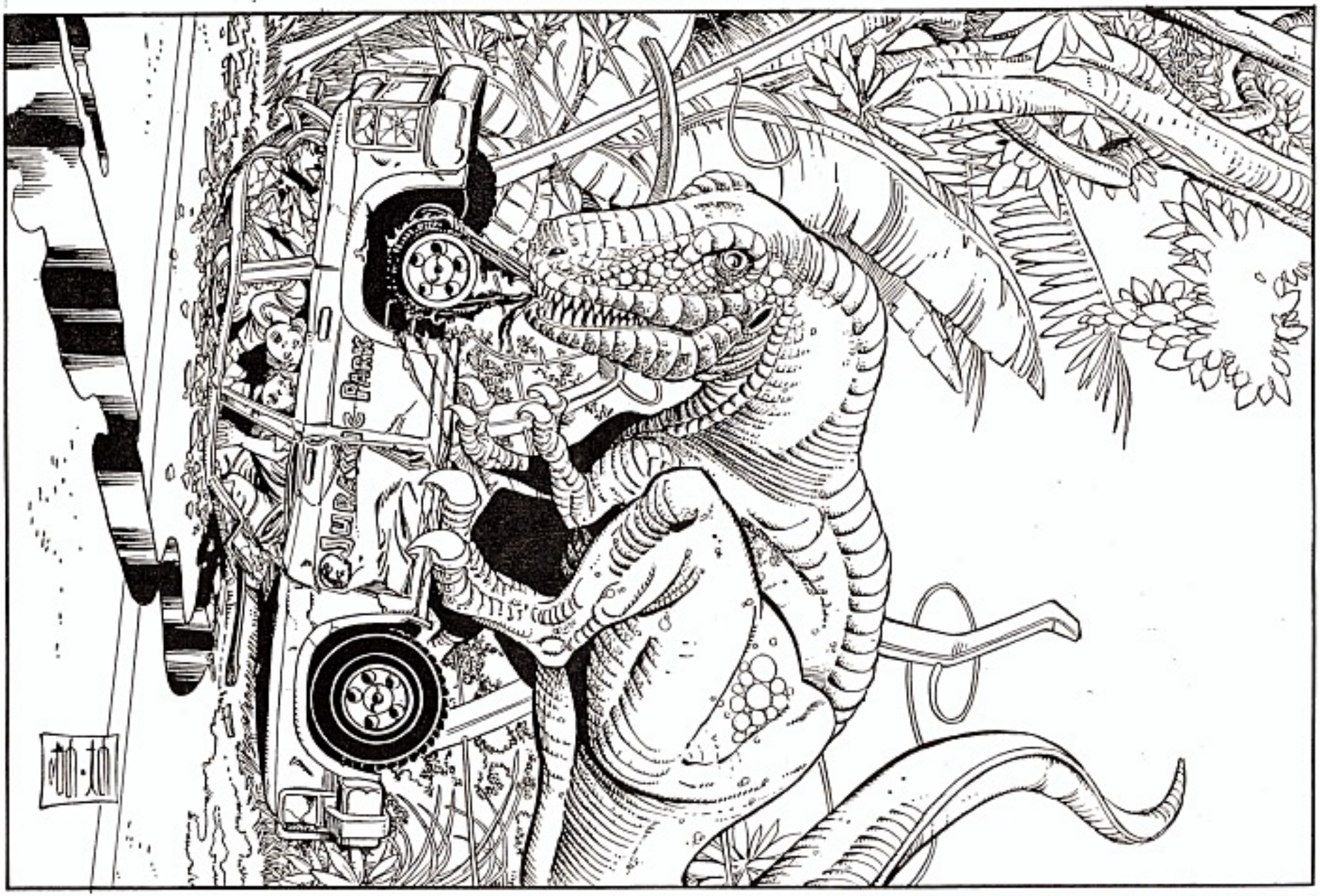


© Marvel Characters, Inc.

Pérez inks over G. Vazquez pencils

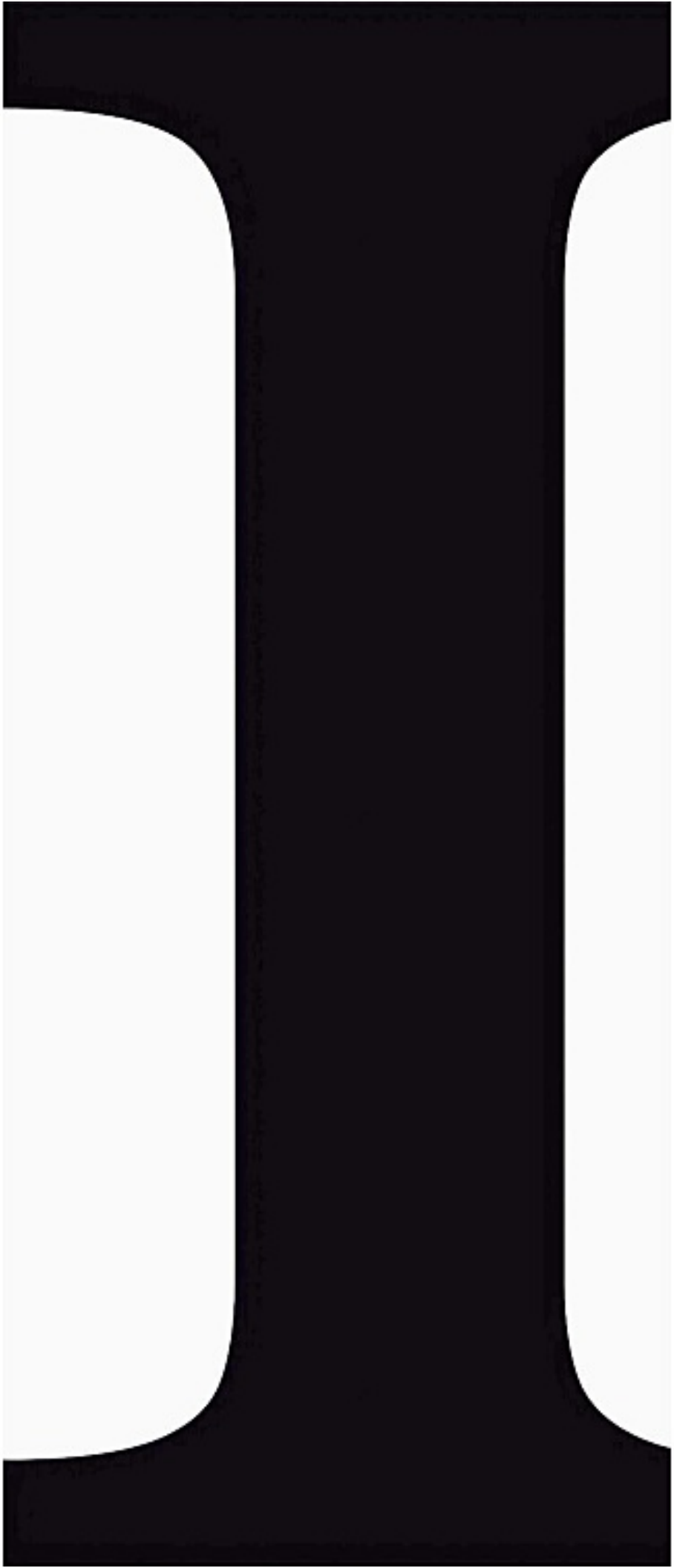
© Universal Studios



Pérez inks over Gil Kane pencils

© Will Eisner Estate

The Spirit Penciled by
Will Eisner and inked by Pérez



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THE ARCHIVES

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THE PÉREZ ARCHIVES

Celebrating the artwork and career of George Pérez

by Andy Mangels (www.andymangels.com)

This section highlights George Perez's work for DC Comics, Marvel Comics,Malibu, Crossgen, and other independents. For a more extensive index of Perez's work please refer to the bibliography section in this book.

MARVEL COMICS

Adventures of The Thing
#1, Apr. 1992
1-page illustration of Fantastic Four by Pérez
#3, June 1992
Artist: Pérez, 4 pp.

Astonishing Tales
#25, Aug. 1974
Artist: Pérez, 2 pp.

***Avengers* (Vol. 1)**
#141, Nov. 1975
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
#142, Dec. 1975
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
#143, Jan. 1976
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
#144, Feb. 1976
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#147, May 1976
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#148, June 1976
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#149, July 1976
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Frank Giacoia
#150, Aug. 1976
Artist: Pérez, 6 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dan Adkins
#151, Sept. 1976
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#154, Dec. 1976
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#155, Jan. 1977
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#160, June 1977
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#161, July 1977
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Pablo Marcos
#162, Aug. 1977
Artist: Pérez, 16 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#163, Sept. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Pablo Marcos
#164, Oct. 1977
Cover: Pérez/John Tartaglione
#165, Nov. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Pablo Marcos
#166, Dec. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Chua
#167, Jan. 1978
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#168, Feb. 1978
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#170, Apr. 1978
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#171, May 1978
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#172, June 1978
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#173, July 1978
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#174, Aug. 1978
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#181, Mar. 1979
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#183, May 1979
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#184, June 1979
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#185, July 1979
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#191, Jan. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Sal Buscema
#192, Feb. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#194, Apr. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Josef Rubenstein
#195, May 1980
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dan Green
#196, June 1980
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Joe Rubinstein
#197, July 1980
Splash Page: Pérez
Co-ver: Pérez/Bob McLeod
#198, Aug. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#199, Sept. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#200, Oct. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 35 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#201, Nov. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 13 pp.
Artist: Pérez, 8 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#202, Dec. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
#379, Oct. 1994
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Flip-Cover (Giant Man): Pérez
Note: Titled "Marvel Double Feature ... The Avengers/ Giant-Man" in indicia
#380, Nov. 1994
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Flip-Cover (Giant Man): Pérez
Note: Titled "Marvel Double Feature ... The Avengers/ Giant-Man" in indicia
#381, Dec. 1994
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Flip-Cover (Giant Man): Pérez
Note: Titled "Marvel Double Feature ... The Avengers/ Giant-Man" in indicia
#382, Jan. 1995
Writer: Pérez, 23 pp.
Flip-Cover (Giant Man): Pérez 1 pp. illustration combining covers to issues Avengers (vol 1) #379-382 into one large image of Giant Man by Pérez
Note: Titled "Marvel Double Feature ... The Avengers/ Giant-Man" in indicia

***Avengers Annual* (Vol. 1)**
#6, 1976
Artist: Pérez, 27 pp.
#8, 1978
Artist: Pérez, 34 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin

***Avengers* (Vol. 3)**
#1, Feb. 1998
Artist: Pérez, 39 pp.
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
Includes one text page with three examples of Pérez art changes on book
#1, Feb. 1998
Alternate cover by Pérez featuring Hulk, Iron Man, Captain America and Thor
#1, Feb. 1998
Alternate cover - Signed and numbered edition from Dynamic Forces
Signed in black ink by Pérez
Limited to 1500 copies with certificate of authenticity
#2, Mar. 1998
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#2, Mar. 1998
Alternate cover by Ray Lago (painting)
#3, Apr. 1998
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#4, May 1998
Artist: Pérez, 39 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Also includes a four-page foldout poster by Pérez
#5, June 1998
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#6, July 1998
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez (homage to Gil Kane/John Romita cover of Avengers Vol. 1 #141)
#7, Aug. 1998
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#8, Sept. 1998
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#9, Oct. 1998
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#10, Nov. 1998
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#11, Dec. 1998
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#12, Jan. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 38 pp.
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
#12, Jan. 1999
Alternate cover by Pérez featuring Avengers heads in energy circle
Retailer incentive shipped by Marvel, no logo
#12, Jan. 1999
Alternate cover by Pérez featuring Avengers and Thunderbolts charging forward. Limited edition from Dynamic Forces
Limited to 5000 copies with certificate of authenticity
#12, Jan. 1999
Alternate cover - Signed and numbered edition from Dynamic Forces
Signed in black ink by Pérez, Al Vey, and Tom Smith
Limited to 1500 copies with certificate of authenticity
#13, Feb. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Also features debut of new Avengers heads in upper cover box by Pérez
#14, Mar. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: The story features a guest appearance by Pérez.
#15, Apr. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#16, May 1999
Alternate Cover: Jerry Ordway/Pérez
#18, July 1999
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Inks: Al Vey, Jerry Ordway and Pérez (page 22 only)
#19, Aug. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#20, Sept. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#21, Oct. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#22, Nov. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#23, Dec. 1999
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez#24, Jan. 2000
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#25, Feb. 2000
Artist: Pérez, 38 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#25, Feb. 2000
Signed and numbered edition from Dynamic Forces
Signed in black ink by Pérez, Al Vey, and Tom Smith
Limited to 500 copies with certificate of authenticity
#26, Mar. 2000
Cover: Stuart Immonen/ Pérez
#27, Apr. 2000
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez and Al Vey
Also reprints the story from Avengers (Vol. 1) #150-151
#28, May 2000
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez (after Ernie Chan, from Conan the Barbarian #75)
#29, June 2000
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#30, July 2000
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#31, Aug. 2000
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#32, Sept. 2000
Layout: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#33, Oct. 2000
Artist: Pérez and Paul Ryan (finished pencils pp. 8-17), 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#34, Nov. 2000
Artist: Pérez, 38 pp.
Cover: Pérez

Avengers Casebook
#1, Feb. 2000
Reprints several Pérez covers & illustrations from past Avengers Also prints unused Scarlet Witch in bondage cover for issue #2 includes a one-sentence quote by Pérez and much discussion of his work
Cover: Pérez (new art & reprints of heads)

Avengers Finale
#1, Nov. 2004
2 interior pages by Pérez

Avengers Forever
#1, Dec. 1995
Cover: Carlos Pacheco/ Pérez
#1, Dec. 1995
Cover: Carlos Pacheco/ Pérez (Kang)
Numbered edition from Westfield Comics
Limited to 5000 copies with certificate of authenticity

Avengers/JLA
#2, Oct. 2003
Pencils: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#2, Oct. 2003
Signed edition from Dynamic Forces
#4, Oct. 2003
Pencils: Pérez
Cover: Pérez

Avengers Log
#1, Feb. 1994
Reprints several Pérez covers & illustrations from past Avengers

Covers: Pérez (front & back)

Avengers Rough Cut
#1, July 1998
Cover: Pérez
Reprints entire contents of *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #1 in pen oil form by Pérez
#1, July 1998
Signed and numbered edition from Dynamic Forces
Signed in blue ink by Pérez
Limited to 1500 copies with certificate of authenticity

Avengers/Squadron Supreme '98
#1, Summer 1998
Wraparound Cover: Carlos Pacheco/Pérez
#1, Summer 1998
Signed and numbered edition from Dynamic Forces
Signed in black ink by Pérez
Limited to 750 copies with certificate of authenticity

Avengers/UltraForce
#1, Oct. 1995
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
Note: Cover has silver foil and joins with cover of *UltraForce/Avengers* #1 to create single image by Pérez
This issue is continued from *UltraForce/Avengers* Prelude #1, published by Malibu

Avengers Universe
#1, Oct. 2000
(month incorrect in indicia)
Reprints covers and interior stories of *Avengers* (Vol. 3) issues #10-11
Indicia lists Vol. 1 #3 and says it reprints issues #8-9.
#2, July 2000
Reprints covers and interior stories of *Avengers* (Vol. 3) issues #13-15
#3, Oct. 2000
Reprints covers and interior stories of *Avengers* (Vol. 3) issues #8-9

Black Widow: Web of Intrigue
#1
Reprints stories from *Marvel Fanfare* #10-13

***Captain America* (Vol. I)**
#243, Mar. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#246, June 1980
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin

Classic X-Men
#18, Feb. 1988
Inside Back Cover: Pérez/Bob Layton
(Reprints cover of X-Men #112)

Creatures on the Loose
#33, Jan. 1975, "Deathgame"
Artist: Pérez, 15 pp.
#34, Mar. 1975, "Nightlight"
Artist: Pérez, 19 pp.
Cover: Pérez/John Romita/Tony Mortellaro
#35, May 1975 "Wolfquest"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
#36, July 1975, "Weird Stone"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
#37, Sept. 1975, "Moonbound"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.

Defenders
#51, Sept. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Pablo Marcos
#53, Nov. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Bob Wiacek
#54, Dec. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Chua
#64, Oct. 1978
Cover: Pérez/Frank Giacoia

***Fantastic Four* (Vol. I)**
#164, Nov. 1975,
"The Crusader Syndrome"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
#165, Dec. 1975,
"The Light of Other Worlds!"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
#166, Jan. 1976,
"If It's Tuesday This Must Be the Hulk!"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#167, Feb. 1976, "Titans Two"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#170, May 1976, "A Sky-Full of Fear!"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#171, June 1976,
"Death Is A Golden Gorilla"
Artist: Pérez, 14 pp.
#172, July 1976,
"Cry, The Bedeviled Planet"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#176, Nov. 1976,
"The Impossible Man Is Back In Town"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Note: The story features a guest-appearance by Pérez.
#177, Dec. 1976,
"Look Out for the Frightful Four!"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#178, Jan. 1977,
"Call My Killer ... Brute"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#183, June 1977
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#184, July 1977,
"Aftermath: The Eliminator"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#185, Aug. 1977,
"Here There Be Witches!"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#186, Sept. 1977,
"Enter: Salem's Seven"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#187, Oct. 1977, "Trouble Times Two"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dave Cockrum
#188, Nov. 1977,
"The Rampage of Reed Richards"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#191, Feb. 1978, "Four No More"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#192, Mar. 1978,
"He Who Soweth the Wind"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Frank Giacoia
#194, May 1978
Cover: Pérez
#195, June 1978
Cover: Pérez
#196, July 1978
Cover: Pérez
#197, Aug. 1978
Cover: Pérez

***Fantastic Four Annual* (Vol. I)**
#14, 1979, "Cat's Paw!"
Artist: Pérez, 29 pp.
#15, 1980, "Time for the Prime Ten"
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez/ Joe Sinnott

***Fantastic Four* (Vol. 3)**
#54, Apr. 2002
Reprints vol. 1 #176
Artist: Pérez

***Ghost Rider* (Vol. I)**
#26, Oct. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Rudy Nebres

***G.I. Joe* (Vol. I)**
#127, Aug. 1992
1-page illustration of Baroness by Pérez

***Guardians of the Galaxy* (Vol. I)**
#7, Dec. 1990
Cover: Jim Valentino/Pérez

Heroes
#1, Oct. 2001
Interior Pin-up image

Heroes Reborn: The Return
#1, Dec. 1997
Two page preview of *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #1 with pre-printed art by Pérez
Reprinted in issues #2-3, and in slightly different form in issue #4 (all Dec.)

***The Incredible Hulk* (Vol. I)**
#435, Nov. 1995
Preprints five illustrations (in color for the only time) by Pérez from the hardcover novel *The Incredible Hulk: What Savage Beast*

Incredible Hulk and Wolverine
#1, Oct. 1986
Reprints story from *Marvel Treasury Edition* #26

The Incredible Hulk: Future Imperfect
#1, Dec. 1992, "Future Imperfect"
Artist: Pérez, 48 pp.
Covers: Pérez
1-page frontspiece illustration of city silhouette by Pérez
Note: Indicia lists first printing as "January 1993"
#2, Jan. 1993
"Future Imperfect Conclusion"
Artist: Pérez, 48 pp.
Covers: Pérez
1-page frontspiece illustration of rubble by Pérez
Note: indicia lists first printing as "December 1992"
#1 & 2, 1993
Signed and numbered set from Heroes Aren't Hard To Find
Signed in green ink by Peter David, Pérez, and Tom Smith
Includes special card with new illustration of Hulk and Maestro by Pérez
Limited to 1200 copies with certificate of authenticity

The Infinity Gauntlet
#1, July 1991, "God"
Artist: Pérez, 40 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#1, 1991
Signed and numbered set from Heroland Comics
Signed by Pérez in "platinum" ink
Includes special card with new illustration of Thanos and Silver Surfer by Pérez
Limited to 3500 copies with Certificate of Authenticity
Proceeds from sale went to help combat Juvenile Diabetes
#2, Aug. 1991, "From Bad To Worse"
Artist: Pérez, 40 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#3, Sept. 1991,
"Preparations For War"
Artist: Pérez, 40 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#4, Oct. 1991,
"Cosmic Battle On the Edge of the Universe"
Pencillers: Ron Lim and Pérez (Pgs. 1-4, 6, 8-12), 10 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#5, Nov. 1991
Cover: Ron Lim/Pérez
#6, Dec. 1991
Cover: Ron Lim/Pérez

***Inhumans* (Vol. I)**
#1, Oct. 1975, "Spawn of Alien Heat"
Artist: Pérez, 19 pp.
#2, Dec. 1975, "Star-Slaves"
Artist: Pérez, 19 pp.
#3, Feb. 1976, "Panic in New York"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#4, Apr. 1976,
"The Doom Called Shatterstar"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#4, Apr. 1976
Variant cover features 30-cent price experiment
#8, Dec. 1976,
"StarSearch: Dust and Demons"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.

***Iron Man* (Vol. I)**
#102, Sept. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Pablo Marcos
#103, Oct. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Mike Esposito

John Carter, Warlord of Mars
#12, May 1978
Artist: Pérez/Rudy Nebres
#13, June 1978
Cover: Pérez/Rudy Nebres
#14, July 1978
Cover: Pérez/Rudy Nebres
#16, Sept. 1978
Cover: Pérez/Rudy Nebres
#18, Nov. 1978
Cover: Pérez/Rudy Nebres
#24, May 1979
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin

Logan's Run
#1, Jan. 1977, "Part One"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Al Milgrom
#2, Feb. 1977, "Cathedral Kill"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Tom Palmer
#3, Mar. 1977, "Sanctuary!?"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Klaus Janson
#4, Apr. 1977, "Ice-World of Box"
Artist: Pérez, 16 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Klaus Janson
#5, May 1977, "End-Run"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Frank Giacoia

Marvel Age
#19, Oct. 1984
Features four-page article on failure of *JLA/Avengers* project, quoting Pérez from interviews in Comics Interview and Chan Reaction
#99, Apr. 1991
Features pre-publication first 7 pages from *Infinity Gauntlet* #1
by Pérez and Josef Rubinstein
#118, Nov. 1992
Cover: Pérez
1-page illustration of Hulk by Pérez
Note: This issue is polybagged with insert Marvel Masterpieces trading card
#119, Dec. 1992
Cover: Small inset image of Hulk by Pérez
#122, Mar. 1993
1-page inside back cover illustration of X-Men and *Avengers* by Darren Auck/Pérez
#129, Oct. 1993
Flip Cover: Pérez
1-page small illustration of Sachs & Violens by Pérez

Marvel Collectible Classics: Avengers #1
#1, 1998
Reprints contents of *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #1 with art by Pérez and Al Vey
Wraparound cover is chromium design
#1, 1998
Signed and numbered edition from Dynamic Forces
Signed in black ink by Pérez
Misceritled as "Marvel Chromium Classics"
Limited to 1500 copies with certificate of authenticity

Marvel Fanfare
#10, Aug. 1983, "Widow"
Artist: Pérez, 9 pp.
Cover: Pérez

#11, Nov. 1983, "Back in the U.S.S.R."
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Inker: Joe Sinnott/Jack Abel
Cover: Pérez/Bob Layton
#12, Jan. 1984, "The Web Tighters"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#13, Mar. 1984, "The Widow ... Alone"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.

Marvel Holiday Special
1994
Cover: Pérez
1996, "Hark! The Herald!"
Plot: Pérez, 10 pp.
Script: Stan Lee

The Marvel Masterpieces 2 Collection
#2, Aug. 1994
1-page illustration of The Beast by Pérez
#3, Sept. 1994
1-page illustration of Thing by Pérez

Marvel Premiere
#45, Dec. 1978, "Otherwar"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Bob McLeod
#46, Feb. 1979, "Stargod!"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin

Marvel Tales
#201, July 1987
Cover: Pérez/Dave Hunt
(Reprints cover to *Marvel Team-Up* #65)
#259, Mar. 1992
Cover: Pérez
#260, Apr. 1992
Cover: Pérez
#261, May 1992
Cover: Pérez

Marvel Team-Up
#65, Jan. 1978
Cover: Pérez/Dave Hunt

Marvel Two-In-One
#32, Oct. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Pablo Marcos
#33, Nov. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#42, Aug. 1978
Cover: Pérez/Austin
#50, Apr. 1979
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#51, May 1979
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#52, June 1979
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#54, Aug. 1979
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#55, Sept. 1979
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#56, Oct. 1979, "The Deadlier of the Species"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
#57, Nov. 1979, "When Walks Wundarr"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Al Milgrom
#58, Dec. 1979, "To the Nth Power"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#60, Feb. 1980, "Happiness Is a Warm Alien"
Artist: Pérez, 17 pp.
Note: The story features a guest-appearance by Pérez.
#61, Mar. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#62, Apr. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott
#63, May 1980
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#64, June 1980, "From the Depths"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Gene Day
#65, July 1980, "Serpents from the Sea"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Gene Day
#66, Aug. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#70, Dec. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott

Marvel Vision
#4, Apr. 1996
In article on *UltraForce*, there is a small illustration of Lament by Pérez on pg. 60, originally intended as a Malibu cover box but unused anywhere else.
#22, Oct. 1997
Cover: Pérez
This issue is polybagged with an AOL CD-Rom
#23, Nov. 1997
Four page interview with Kurt Busiek including some pre-printed Avengers art by Pérez

Mighty Mouse
#4, Jan. 1991
Cover: Pérez
Note: Cover parodies Pérez's own cover to Crisis on Infinite Earths *#7*
#5, Feb. 1991
Note: Cover parodies Pérez's own cover to Crisis on Infinite Earths*#12, and is signed "Ernie Pérez" but the cover is solely the work of artist Ernie Colón.*

Ms. Marvel
#23, Apr. 1979
Cover: Pérez/Bob Wiacek

***Nova* (Vol. 1)**
#14, Oct. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Frank Giacoia

Official Handbook Of The Marvel Universe
#13, Feb. 1984
1-page illustration of Man-Wolf by Pérez/Joe Rubinstein (from *Marvel Premiere* #45)

Official Handbook Of The Marvel Universe Deluxe Edition
#12, Nov. 1986
2-page illustration of the *Sons of The Tiger* by Pérez/Joe Rubinstein

Official Handbook Of The Marvel Universe Marvel Knights
Mid-2005
Some interior art by Pérez

Official Handbook Of The Marvel Universe Master Edition
#19, Mid-1992
1-page illustration of Avengers (5th lineup) by Pérez

The Origin of Galactus
#14, Feb. 1996
1-page illustration reprints cover to *Infinity Gauntlet* #5 by Ron Lim/Pérez without logo or text

Power Man
#27, Oct. 1975, "Just a Guy Named X"
Artist: Pérez, 18 pp.

Sergio Aragonés Massacres Marvel
#1, June 1996, "Just a Guy Named X"
Inker: Pérez (pages 3-4), 2pp.

***Silver Surfer* (Vol. 2)**
#111, Dec. 1995 "111"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Tom Grindberg/Pérez
#112, Jan. 1996, "Catch a Wave and You're Sitting on Top of the World"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Tom Grindberg/Pérez
#113, Feb. 1996, "Black Water"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Tom Grindberg/Pérez
#114, Mar. 1996, "Deja Vu? / I Go To Pieces"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Tom Grindberg/Pérez
#115, Apr. 1996, "How Much Is That Surfer In The Window?"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Tom Grindberg/Pérez
#116, May 1996, "Surfing With the Alien"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Tom Grindberg/Pérez
#117, June 1996, "Make The World Go Away"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Scot Eaton/Pérez
#118, July 1996, "Cosmic Thing"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
#119, Aug. 1996, "Storm Front"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
#120, Sept. 1996, "Burning Hell"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
#121, Oct. 1996, "Execution Day"
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
#122, Nov. 1996, "It's The End Of The World As We Know It"
Writer: Pérez, 21 pp.
1 pp. "Creator Profile: George Pérez" also appeared in *Star Trek: Voyager* #1
#123, Dec. 1996, "Square One"
Plotter: Pérez, 23 pp.

Silver Surfer/Superman
#1, Jan. 1997, "Rap!"
Writer: Pérez, 50 pp.

The Spectacular Spider-Man ("Peter Parker is")
#9, Aug. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Al Milgrom
#10, Sept. 1977
Cover: Pérez/Frank Giacoia

The Spectacular Spider-Man Super Special
#1, Sept. 1995, "The Cycle Of Life"
Inker: Pérez, 10 pp.

Spider-Man: Hobgoblin Lives
#1, Jan 1997, "Victims"
Inker: Pérez, 32 pp.
Wraparound Cover: Ron Frenz/Pérez
#2, Feb. 1997
Wraparound Cover: Ron Frenz/Pérez
#3, Apr. 1997
Wraparound Cover: Ron Frenz/Pérez

Spider-Man: The Jackal Files
#1, Aug. 1995
1 pp. illustration of Spider-Man by Pérez
Cover: partial reprint of interior illustration by Pérez

Spider-Man Team-Up
#2, Mar. 1996
Script: Pérez, 38 pp.
#4, Sept. 1996
Writer: Pérez, 54 pp.
Cover: Pérez

Star Masters
#1, Dec. 1995
Cover: Scot Eaton/Pérez

Super-Villain Team-Up
#15, Nov. 1978
Cover: Pérez/Joe Sinnott

Thunderbolts '97
#15, Nov. 1997
Artists: Pérez (3 pages), 3 pp.

Unlimited Access
#3, Feb. 1998
Cover: Patrick Oliffe/Pérez
Note: This book is co-published with DC Comics.

Untold Tales Of Spider-Man
#16, Dec. 1996
Cover: Pat Oliffe/Pérez

***What If?* (Vol. 1)**
#15, July 1979
Artist: Pérez, 7 pp.

Wolverine Battles the Incredible Hulk
1989
Reprints story from *Marvel Treasury Edition* #26

The Wolverine Saga
#2, Nov. 1989
Reprints some panels from story in *Marvel Treasury Edition* #26

X-51: The Machine Man
#5, Dec. 1999
Cover: Pérez (art printed backwards)

***X-Men* (Vol. 1)**
#112, Aug. 1978
Cover: Pérez/Bob Layton
#128, Dec. 1979
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin

***X-Men Annual* (Vol. 1)**
#3, 1979
Artist: Pérez, 35 pp.

X-Men: Rarities
July 1995
"Reprints" story from *Bizarre Adventures* #27
Oddly, this uses redrawn and newly colored art, "inspired by George Pérez and Alfredo Alcala." The new "artist" is not credited, but the colorist is Ariane.

X-Men Unlimited
#11, June 1996
1-page illustration of The X-Women by Pérez
#13, Dec. 1996
Plot: Pérez, 39 pp.
Cover: Duncan Rouleau/Pérez

EPIC/MARVEL COMICS

Sachs & Violens
#1, Nov. 1993
Artist: Pérez, 28 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Frontspiece and back cover illustrations taken from interiors by Pérez
#1, 1993
Same as regular edition but signed by Peter David and Pérez in metallic ink
Signed and numbered set from Limited Treasured Editions Limited to 1150 copies with certificate of authenticity
Certificate included entry in a contest for dinner with Peter David or Pérez
#1, 1993
Same as regular edition but with silver foil cover
2-page illustrations of Sachs and Violens taken from Heavy Hitters trading cards by Pérez
100 copies could be won by entrants to Epic "Heavy Hitters" contest
Also available at conventions for a $50 donation, with proceeds to benefit the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund
#2, May 1994
Artist: Pérez, 28 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Frontspiece and back cover illustrations taken from interiors by Pérez
Note: Includes bound-in trading card #10, for Dragon Lines and contest entry
#3, June 1994
Artist: Pérez, 28 pp.
Inkers: Pérez/Arne Starr
Cover: Pérez
Frontspiece and back cover illustrations taken from interiors by Pérez
Note: Includes bound-in trading card #17, for Midnight Men and contest entry

#4, July 1994
Artist: Pérez, 28 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Frontpiece and back cover illustrations taken from interiors by Pérez
Note: Includes bound-in trading card #20, for Terrorists and contest entry form

Law Dog
#9, Jan. 1994
Includes bound-in trading card #18, for *Sachs & Violens* and contest entry form
Trading card art is new illustration of Sachs by Pérez

Terrorists
#4, Feb. 1994
Includes bound-in trading card #21, for *Sachs & Violens* and contest entry form
Trading card art is new illustration of Violens by Pérez

MARVEL COMICS - BOOKS & COLLECTIONS

***Avengers Assemble Vol. 1* Hardcover** 2004
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #1-11, 1998 Annual
Cover: Pérez

***Avengers Assemble Vol. 2* Hardcover** 2005
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #12-22, 0, 1999 Annual
Cover: Pérez

***Avengers Assemble Vol. 3* Hardcover** 2006
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #23-34, 1.5, *Thunderbolts* 42-44
Cover: Pérez

***Avengers: Clear & Present Dangers* Trade Paperback**
Aug. 2001
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #8-15
Cover: Pérez (recolored Retailer incentive cover to issue #12)

***Avengers: Disassembled* Trade Paperback**
Feb. 2005
Reprints *Avengers* #500-503 and *Avengers Finale*

***Avengers: The Korvac Saga* Trade Paperback**
Jan. 1991
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 1) #167, 168, 170-177
Covers: Pérez (front & back)

***Avengers: Living Legends* Trade Paperback**
Aug. 2004
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #23-30
Cover: Pérez

***Avengers: The Morgan Conquest* Trade Paperback**
Jan. 2000
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #1-4
Includes covers to #1-3 and variant editions #1-2
Cover: Pérez

***Avengers: The Serpent Crown* Trade Paperback**
Sept. 2005
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 1) #141-144 and 147-149

***Avengers: Supreme Justice* Trade Paperback**
Apr. 2001
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 2) #5-7, *Avengers/Squadron Supreme Annual*, *Iron Man* (Vol. 3) #7, *Captain America* (Vol. 3) #8, and *Quicksilver* #10
Cover: Pérez/Scott Hanna/Tim Townsend/ Norman Lee/ Bob Almond (inker jam)

***Avengers/Thunderbolts Vol. 1: The Nefaria Protocols* Trade Paperback**
Mar. 2004
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #31-34 and *Thunderbolts* #42-44
Avengers Pencils by Pérez

***Avengers: Ultron Unleashed* Trade Paperback**
Aug. 1999
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 1) #170-171
Cover: John Buscema/Pérez

***Avengers: Ultron Unlimited* Trade Paperback**
Apr. 2001
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 3) #19-22 & 0
Cover: Pérez (recolored cover to issue #22)

***Avengers Visionaries: George Pérez* Trade Paperback**
1999
Reprints *Avengers* (Vol. 1) #161, 162, 194-196, 201 and *Avengers Annual* #6, 8
Cover: Pérez

***Best of the Fantastic Four* Hardcover**
May 2005
Reprints *Fantastic Four* (Vol. 1) #39-40, 51, 100, 116, 176, 236, 267 (vol. 3) 56, 60, *Marvel Fanfare* #15, *Marvel Two-in-One* 50, *Marvel Knights 4* #4

***Crossover Classics: The Marvel/DC Collection* Trade Paperback**
1991, Marvel/DC Comics
Covers: Pérez (front & back)
Reprints 1 pp. illustration from *Batman vs. the Hulk*, by Pérez and Dick Giordano

***The Essential X-Men* Trade Paperback**
1996
Vol. 1 reprints cover to *X-Men* #112
1997
Vol. 2 reprints cover to *X-Men* #128
1998
Vol. 3 reprints cover to *X-Men Annual* #3

***Fantastic Four Visionaries: George Pérez* Trade Paperback**
June 2005
Vol. 1 Reprints *Fantastic Four* (vol. 1) #164-167, 170, 176-178, 187-186
May 2006
Vol. 2 Reprints *Fantastic Four* (vol. 1) #187-188, 191-192, *Fantastic Four Annual* #14-15, *Marvel Two-in-One* #60, *Adventures of the Thing* #3

***The Incredible Hulk: Future Imperfect* Trade Paperback**
Aug. 1994
Reprints *The Incredible Hulk: Future Imperfect* #1-2
1 pp. new text piece by Pérez
Covers by Pérez are taken from interior and cover art for the mini-series
First printing had two pages out of order, corrected in later printings
Note: Page one of issue #2 is not reprinted

***The Incredible Hulk: Future Imperfect* Hardcover**
Oct. 1994, Marvel Limited
Reprints *The Incredible Hulk: Future Imperfect* #1-2
2 pp. new illustrations of Hulk painted by Tom Smith (based on work by Pérez)
Covers for both issues and trade paperback are reprinted
2 pp. listing and guide to all items Pérez drew in Rick Jones' Trophy Room
Hardcover edition features dustjacket with green foil and reprinted art by Pérez
The hardcover binding features foil inlays of interior art by Pérez
This hardcover was a limited edition item, allocated by Marvel to certain stores
Hardcover is listed as a "Marvel Limited" book

***The Infinity Gauntlet* Trade Paperback**
Aug. 1992
Reprints *The Infinity Gauntlet* #1-6 (cover reprint by Pérez)
Early 2000
Reprints *The Infinity Gauntlet* #1-6 (different cover by Jim Starlin)

***Squadron Supreme: Death of a Universe* Trade Paperback** 2006
Reprints *Thor* #280, *Avengers (Vol. 3)* #5-6, *Avengers/ Squadron Supreme 1998 Annual* (cover by Pérez)

***Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe* Trade Paperback**
Vol. 6, 1987
Reprints *Marvel Universe* #12 illustration by Pérez and Joe Rubinstein

***The Thing: The Project Pegasus Saga* Trade Paperback**
Feb. 1988
Reprints *Marvel Two-In One* #56-58

***X-Men: Danger Room Battle Archives* Trade Paperback 1996**
Reprints *X-Men Annual* #3

***X-Men: Road Trippin'!* Trade Paperback**
2000
Reprints story from *Marvel Treasury Edition* #26

DC COMICS

Action Comics
#529, Mar. 1982
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#544, June 1983
1-page illustration of the New Luthor by Pérez (credited for design as well)
#563, Jan. 1985
Single-panel shot of Bethany Snow by Pérez
#600, May 1988
Finisher: Pérez, 33 pp.
Cover: Byrne/Pérez (partial)
#602, June 1988
Cover: Pérez
#643, July 1989
Writer: Pérez, 22 pp.
Breakdowns: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
(after Joe Shuster)
#644, Aug. 1989, "Doppleganger"
Writers: Pérez and Roger Stern, Breakdowns: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#645, Sept. 1989, "My Lady Maxima"
Writer: Roger Stern and Pérez
Breakdowns: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#646, Oct. 1989
Cover: Pérez
#647, Nov. 1989, "Brain Drain"
Breakdowns: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#648, Dec. 1989, "Body & Mind
Breakdowns: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#649, Jan. 1990, "Man and Machine"
Breakdowns: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#650, Feb. 1990
Artist: Pérez, 8 pp. (pp. 13-20)
Cover: Pérez
#651, Mar. 1990
Breakdowns: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#652, Apr. 1990
Breakdowns: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez

Action Comics Annual
#2, 1989
Writer: Pérez
Inker: Pérez, 16 1/2 pp. (interspersed throughout entire story)
Cover: Pérez/Jerry Ordway

Adventure Comics
#484, Aug. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#485, Sept. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#486, Oct. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#490, Feb. 1982
Cover: Pérez/Bob Smith

The Adventures of Superman
#457, Aug. 1989
Plotter: Pérez, 22 pp.
#458, Sept. 1989
Plotter: Pérez, 22 pp.
#459, Oct. 1989
Plotter: Pérez, 22 pp.
#461, Dec. 1989
Finishes: Pérez, 22 pp.

All Star Squadron Annual
#3, 1984
Artist: Pérez, 3 pp.

Amethyst, Princess of Gemworld
#4, Aug. 1983
Cover: Ernie Colon/Pérez (border only)
#5, Sept. 1983
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Colon
#6, Oct. 1983
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Colon
#7, Nov. 1983
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Colon
#8, Dec. 1983
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Colon
#9, Jan. 1984
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Colon
#10, Feb. 1984
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Colon
#11, Mar. 1984
Cover: Pérez/Ernie Colon

Batman
#400, Oct. 1986
Artist: Pérez, 4 pp.
#436, 1989
Cover: Pérez
#437, 1989
Cover: Pérez
#438, 1989
Cover: Pérez
#439, 1989
Cover: Pérez
#440, (undated in indicia, but Aug.) 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#441, (undated in indicia, but Sept.) 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez (uncredited), 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#442, (undated in indicia, but Oct.) 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez

Batman and Other DC Classics
#1, 1989
Reprints 4 pages from *The Judas Contract* TPB
Retailer giveaway from DC and Diamond Distributors

Batman and the Outsiders
#5, Dec. 1983
Cover: Pérez/Jim Aparo (links with *New Teen Titans* #37 to form single image)

The Batman Gallery
#1, June 1992
Reprints *New Titans* #61

cover (sans logo) by Pérez

Batman: KnightGallery
1995
1-page illustration of Robin designed by Pérez (but drawn by Tom Lyle)

Batman vs. the Incredible Hulk
1982 (tabloid size)
Inside front cover features Pérez pencils and Dick Giordano inks

Batman vs. the Incredible Hulk
1995
Reprint edition. Inside front cover features Pérez pencils and Dick Giordano inks Cover features gold border. Available bagged with Superman vs. Spider-Man as "Crossover Classics Collector's Set."

Best of DC Digest
#17, Oct. 1981 (Supergirl)
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#18, Nov. 1981 (The Teen Titans)
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#21, Feb. 1982
(Justice Society of America)
Cover: Pérez
#22, Mar. 1982 (Christmas issue)
Back Cover: Pérez
#23, Apr. 1982
("Year's Best Comic Stories")
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
Reprints New Teen Titans #8
#24, May 1982
(Legion of Super-Heroes)
Artist: Pérez, 16 pp.
#35, Apr. 1983
("Year's Best Comic Stories")
Reprints *New Teen Titans* #20
Also reprints cover to *Titans* #16
#50, July 1984 (Superman)
Reprints DC Comics Presents #61
#61, June 1985
("Year's Best Comic Stories")
Reprints *New Teen Titans* #38
#69, Feb. 1986
("Year's Best Team Stories")
Reprints *Tales Of The Teen Titans* #50

Crisis on Infinite Earths
#1, Apr. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 32 pp.
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
Inside Back Cover: Pérez
#2, May 1985
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#3, June 1985
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#4, July 1985
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Letter page illustration of Monitor by Pérez
#5, Aug. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#6, Sept. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#7, Oct. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 42 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#8, Nov. 1985
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#9, Dec. 1985
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#10, Jan. 1986
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Artist : Pérez, 26 pp.
Inkers: Jerry Ordway and Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#11, Feb. 1986
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#12, Mar. 1986
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 42 pp.
Inker: Jerry Ordway and Pérez
Cover: Pérez

DC Comics Presents
#26, Oct. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 16 pp.
#38, Oct. 1981
Cover: Pérez
2-page illustration of first 36 guest stars by Pérez
#61, Sept. 1983
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#94, June 1986
Cover: Pérez

DC Focus
#1, Summer 1987
1-page Pérez illustration with biography and self-portrait
#1, Summer 1987
Same as above, except "Retailer Alert" band over cover art

DC Sampler
#1, 1983
2-page illustration of *Titans* by Pérez
#2, 1984
2-page illustration of *Titans* by Pérez
#3, 1984
2-page illustration of *Crisis on Infinite Earths* by Pérez

DC Special Digest
#19, Mar. 1981 (The Doom Patrol)
Covers: Pérez/Frank Giacoia
1-page illustration of Robotman by Pérez

Deathstroke The Terminator
#10, May 1992
Inker: Pérez, 24 pp.
#11, June 1992
Inker: Pérez and Al Vey, 25 pp.

Doctor Fate
#33, Oct. 1991
Cover: Scot Eaton/Pérez

Elson's Presents DC Super Heroes
#2, 1980
Reprints *Justice League of America* #166
#3, 1980
(released later than Jan. 1981)
Reprints *Titans* #3, "The Fearsome Five"

Fifty Who Made DC Great
#1, 1985
1-page illustration and biography of Pérez

Flash
#289, Sept. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 8 pp.
#290, Oct. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 8 pp.
#291, Nov. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 8 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#292, Dec. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 8 pp.
#293, Jan. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 13 pp.
Cover: Pérez

***Flash* (Vol. 2)**
#15, Aug. 1988
Cover: Pérez
#16, Sept. 1988
Cover: Pérez
#17, Oct. 1988
Cover: Pérez

***Flash Annual* (Vol. 2)**
#2, 1988
Cover: Mike Collins/Pérez

Green Lantern
#132, Sept. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#141, June 1981
Cover: Pérez
#142, July 1981
Cover: Pérez
#143, Aug. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#144, Sept. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#145, Oct. 1981
Letters page has small version of unused cover by Pérez

Green Lantern Gallery
#1, Dec. 1996
1-page illustration of Parallax by Pérez

Green Lantern Plus
#1, Dec. 1996
Cover: Scott Kolins/Pérez

Heroes Against Hunger
#1, 1986
Artist: Pérez, 2 pp.
(framing sequence)

History Of The DC Universe
#1, 1986, "Book One"
Artist: Pérez, 49 pp.
Inkers: Karl Kesel and Pérez
Cover: Pérez/Karl Kesel
#2, 1986, "Book Two"
Artist: Pérez, 49 pp.
Inkers: Karl Kesel and Pérez
Cover: Pérez/Karl Kesel

Infinite Crisis
#1, Oct. 2005
Covers: Pérez and Jim Lee
#2, Nov. 2005
Artists: Phil Jimenez and Pérez
Covers: Pérez and Jim Lee
#3, Dec. 2005
Artists: Phil Jimenez and Pérez
Covers: Pérez and Jim Lee
#4, Jan. 2006
Artists: Phil Jimenez, Ivan Reis and Pérez
Covers: Pérez and Jim Lee
#5, Mar. 2006
Covers: Pérez and Jim Lee
#6, Apr. 2006
Artists: Phil Jimenez, Ivan Reis,Jerry Ordway and Pérez
Covers: Pérez and Jim Lee
#7, June 2006
Artists: Phil Jimenez, Ivan Reis, Jerry Ordway and Pérez
Covers: Pérez and Jim Lee

JLA/Avengers
#1, Sept. 2003
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#1, Sept. 2003
Signed edition from Dynamic Forces
#1, Dec. 2003
Batman Remarked, Signed edition from Dynamic Forces
#1, Dec. 2003
Superman Remarked, Signed edition from Dynamic Forces
#3, Nov. 2003
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez

JLA in Crisis Secret Files
#1, Nov. 1998
Reprint cover to *Crisis on Infinite Earths* #7 on first page, with different logo

Justice League of America
#184, Nov. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#185, Dec. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
#186, Jan. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#192, July 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#193, Aug. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#194, Sept. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#195, Oct. 1981
Artist: Keith Pollard (uncredited) and Pérez, 25pp
Cover: Pérez
2-page illustration of the JLA/JSA by Pérez
#196, Nov. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#197, Dec. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 8 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Mike DeCarlo
#199, Feb. 1982
Cover: Pérez
#200, Mar. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 37 pp.
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
#201, Apr. 1982
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#202, May 1982
Cover: Pérez
#203, June 1982
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#204, July 1982
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#205, Aug. 1982
Cover: Pérez/Mike DeCarlo
#207, Oct. 1982
Cover: Pérez
#208, Nov. 1982
Cover: Pérez
#209, Dec. 1982
Cover: Pérez
#212, Mar. 1983
Cover: Pérez
#213, Apr. 1983
Cover: Pérez
#214, May 1983
Cover: Pérez
#215, June 1983
Cover: Pérez
#217, Aug. 1983
Cover: Pérez
#218, Sept. 1983
Cover: Pérez
#219, Oct. 1983
Cover: Pérez
#220, Nov. 1983
Cover: Pérez

Justice League Of America Classics
#217, Aug. 1987
Cover: Pérez (slightly changed from original)
Reprints *Justice League of America* #217, With slight changes, and updated ads. Distributed by SoMuchFun! Inc. One of twelve comics in this format.

Justice Leagues
#1, Mar. 2001, (Part I)
Cover: Pérez
#1, Mar. 2001 (Part I)
Signed and numbered edition from Dynamic Forces Signed in black ink by Pérez Limited to 1500 copies with certificate of authenticity
#1, Mar. 2001,
(Part 2: Justice League of Amazons)
Cover: Pérez
#1, Mar. 2001,
(Part 3: Justice League of Atlantis)
Cover: Pérez
#1, Mar. 2001,
(Part IV: Justice League of Arkham)
Cover: Pérez
#1, Mar. 2001,
(Part V: Justice League of Aliens)
Cover: Pérez
#1, Mar. 2001, (Part VI: JLA)
Cover: Pérez

JSA
#62, Feb. 2006
Artist: Pérez

Cover: Pérez
#83, Mar. 2006
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#84, Apr. 2006
Cover: Pérez
#85, May 2006
Cover: Pérez
#86, June 2006
Cover: Pérez
#87, July 2006
Cover: Pérez

Legends of the DC Universe 80-Page Giant
#1, Sept. 1998
Plot: Marv Wolfman & Pérez, 10 pp.

***Legion of Super-Heroes* (Vol. 2)**
#268, Oct. 1980
Cover: Pérez/Terry Austin
#277, July 1981
Cover: Pérez
#278, Aug. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#279, Sept. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#280, Oct. 1961
Cover: Pérez
#281, Nov. 1981
Cover: Pérez/Bruce Patterson
#300, June 1983
Cover: Pérez (Colossal Boy figure only)

Man Of Steel
#6, Dec. 15, 1986
3-page preview of *Wonder Woman* (Vol. 2) #1
1-page illustration of Wonder Woman by Pérez

Millennium Edition: Crisis on Infinite Earths
#1, 2000
Reprints *Crisis On Infinite Earths* #1 (except back cover/inside cover material)
Cover features embossed golden DC logo
#1, 2000, Chromium
Same as above, except cover is printed on "Chromium" paper Retailer incentive, given out one per retailer at Diamond "Spring Fling" 2000 and at San Diego Expo 2000
#1, 2000
(Re-Marked Supergirl Edition)
Same as above, except signed and numbered edition from Dynamic Forces Signed by Marv Wolfman, Pérez, and Dick Giordano
Limited to 199 copies with certificate of authenticity
Features a Supergirl head sketch by DickGiordano
Note: a signed edition of this book was solicited as a non-remarked edition in October 1999, but was never released due to lateness. The signed editions were instead used & sold for the re-marked editions.
#1, 2000 (Re-Marked Flash Edition)
Same as above, except features a Flash head sketch by Dick Giordano

Millennium Edition: The New Teen Titans
#1, Dec. 2000
Reprints *The New Teen Titans* #1 (Vol. 1)
Cover features embossed golden DC logo

Millennium Edition: Wonder Woman
#1, 2000
Reprints *Wonder Woman* (Vol. 2) #1 (except back cover)
Cover features embossed golden DC logo

***The New Teen Titans* (Vol. 1)**
#1, Nov. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#2, Dec. 1980
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#3, Jan. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#4, Feb. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#5, Mar. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#6, Apr. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#7, May 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#8, June 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#9, July 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#10, Aug. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#11, Sept. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#12, Oct. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#13, Nov. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#14, Dec. 1981
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#15, Jan. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#16, Feb. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#17, Mar. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#18, Apr. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#19, May 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#20, June 1982
Artist: Pérez, 20 pp.
Artist: Pérez, 5 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: The second story features a guest-appear once by Pérez.
#21, July 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#22, Aug. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#23, Sept. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#24, Oct. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#25, Nov. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#26, Dec. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#27, Jan. 1983
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#28, Feb. 1983
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: also debuted "Titans Tower" letter column art by Pérez, reprinted from DC Style Guide
#29, Mar. 1983
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#30, Apr. 1983
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#31, May 1983
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#32, June 1983
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#33, July 1983
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#34, Aug. 1983
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#35, Oct 1983
Cover: Pérez
#36, Nov 1983
Cover: Pérez
#37, Dec. 1983
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez (links with *Batman and the Outsiders* #5 to form single image)
#38, Jan. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Inker: Romeo Tanghal & Pérez (uncredited, pages 1, 2, &23)
Cover: Pérez
#39, Feb. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Inker: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#40, Mar. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Inker: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
Cover: Pérez
23 pp.
Note: also debuted new jet-themed "Titans Tower" letter column art by Pérez

The New Teen Titans (Vol. 2)
#1, Aug. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Inker: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#2, Oct. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Inker: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#3, Nov. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#4, Jan. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#5, Feb. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#6, March 1985
Cover: Pérez
#7, Apr. 1985
Cover: Pérez
#17, Feb. 1986
Cover: Pérez
(uncredited layouts)/ Eduardo Barreto
#19, April 1986
Cover: Pérez
#20, May 1986
Cover: Pérez
#21, June 1986
Cover: Pérez
#22, July 1986
Cover: Pérez
#23, Aug. 1986
Cover: Pérez
Note: Back cover features an ad with new artwork by Pérez for the debut issue of Teen Titans Spotlight. Ad was featured in many DC books that month.
#43, May 1988
Cover: Pérez
#47, Sept. 1988
1-page illustration of Teen Titans and Titans West by Pérez

***New Teen Titans Annual* (Vol. 1)**
#1, 1982
Artist: Pérez, 39 pp.
Cover: Pérez
3-pages original Titans illustrations by Pérez
#2, 1983
Artist: Pérez, 42 pp.
Cover: Pérez

***The New Teen Titans Annual* (Vol. 2)**
#4, 1988
Cover: Pérez

New Teen Titans Drug Issue
#1, 1983
Artist: Pérez, 27 pp.
Covers: Pérez/Dick Giordano (front and back)
#2, 1983
Back Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
Note: original figure of Speedy redrawn into kid Flash by DC production staffer
#3, 1983
Back Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal/Dave Manak

New Teen Titans Drug Benefit Issue
#1, 1983
Reprints free drug issue, but with slightly changed cover and price
#2, 1984
Reprints free drug issue, but with slightly changed cover and price

The New Titans
#50, Dec. 1988
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Penciller: Pérez, 27 pp.
Inker: Pérez/Bob McLeod
Cover: Pérez/John Stracuzzi (painted)
#51, Winter 1988
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Penciller: Pérez, 27 pp.
Cover: Pérez/John Stracuzzi (painted)
#52, Jan. 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Penciller: Pérez, 27 pp.
Cover: Pérez/John Stracuzzi (painted)
#53, Feb. 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Penciller: Pérez, 27 pp.
Cover: Pérez/John Stracuzzi (painted)
#54, Mar. 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Penciller: Pérez, 27 pp.
Cover: Pérez/John Stracuzzi (painted)
#55, June 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Penciller: Pérez, 27 pp.
Cover: Pérez/John Stracuzzi (painted)(after Nick Caroy)
#56, July 1989
Plot: Pérez, 27 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#57, Aug. 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Penciller: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#58, Sept. 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Layouts: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Tom Grummett/Pérez
#59, Oct. 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Layouts: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Tom Grummett/Pérez
#60, Nov. 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Penciller: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#61, Dec. 1989
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Layouts: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#62, Jan. 1990
Cover: Tom Grummett/Pérez
#63, Feb. 1990
Cover: Tom Grummett/Pérez
#64, Mar. 1990
Cover: Tom Grummett/Pérez
#65, Apr. 1990
Cover: Tom Grummett/Pérez
#66, May 1990
Co-Plotter: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Tom Grummett/Pérez
#67, July 1990
Co-Plotter: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Tom Grummett/Pérez
#130, Feb. 1996
Cover: Pérez

The New Titans Annual
#5, 1989
Cover: Chris Wozniak/Pérez

The Return of Donna Troy
#1, 2005
Inks: Pérez (interior/cover)
#2, 2005
Inks: Pérez (interior/cover)
#3, 2005
Inks: Pérez (interior/cover)
#4, 2005
Inks: Pérez (interior/cover)

***Secret Origins* (Vol. 3)**
#50, Aug. 1990
Artist: Pérez, 7 pp.
Note: This is a text story with Pérez spot illustrations
Inker: Pérez, 9 pp.

***Secret Origins Annual* (Vol. 3)**
#3, 1989
Writer: Pérez, 66 pp.
Inkers: Pérez (7 pp.)
1-page illustration of Flamebird by Pérez
1-page illustration of Golden Eagle by Pérez
1-page illustration of Bumblebee by Pérez
1-page illustration of The Herald by Pérez
1-page illustration of The Antithesis and Gargoyle by Pérez
Cover: Pérez

Showcase '93
#11, Nov. 1993
Cover: Pérez

***Star Trek* (Vol. 3)**
#1, Feb. 1984
Cover: Pérez
#2, Mar. 1984
Cover: Pérez
#3, Apr. 1984
Cover: Pérez

***Supergirl Annual* (Vol. 3)**
#1, 1996
Inker: Pérez, 8 pp.

***Superman* (Vol. 1)**
#364, Oct. 1981
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#423, Sept. 1986
Inker: Pérez, 24 pp.

***Superman* (Vol. 2)**
#116, Oct. 1996
Partial Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
Special 8 pp. preview of *Teen Titans* (Vol. 2) series
Reprints cover #1 and various art from *Teen Titans* (Vol. 2)
#1-5

The Superman Gallery
#1, 1993
Reprints cover to *Action Comics* #648 by Pérez

Superman: The Wedding Album
#1, Dec. 1996
Inker: Pérez, 2 pp.
Special Edition with embossed white cover
#1, Dec. 1996
Normal Edition same as above but with John Byrne cover

Tales of the New Teen Titans
#41, Apr. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#42, May 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#43, June 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#44, July 1984
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#45, Aug. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#46, Sept. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#47, Oct. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#48, Nov. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 6 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#49, Dec. 1984
Artist: Pérez, 7 pp.
Cover: Pérez
1-page illustration of Donna and Terry by Pérez
#50, Feb. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 40 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: *The story features a guest-appearance by Pérez.*
#51, Mar. 1985
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#52, Apr. 1985
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#53, May 1985
Cover: Pérez
#59, Nov. 1985
Reprints *DC Comics Presents* #26
Cover: Chuck Patton/Pérez/Dick Giordano#60, Dec. 1985
Reprints *New Teen Titans* (Vol. 2) #1, with minor art changes
#61, Jan. 1986
Reprints *New Teen Titans* (Vol. 2) #2, with minor art changes
#62, Feb. 1986
Reprints *New Teen Titans* (Vol. 2) #3, with minor art changes #63, Mar. 1986
Reprints *New Teen Titans* (Vol. 2) #4
#64, Apr. 1986
Reprints *New Teen Titans* (Vol. 2) #5
#67, July 1986
Cover: Pérez
#89, May 1988
Cover: Rob Liefeld/Pérez

Tales of the New Teen Titans Annual
#3, 1984
Artist: Pérez, 40 pp.
Cover: Pérez

Tales of the New Teen Titans
#1, Jun. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
1-page illustration of Cyborg by Pérez
#2, Jul. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
25 pp.
1-page illustration of Raven by Pérez
#3, Aug. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
1-page illustration of Changeling by Pérez
#4, Sept. 1982
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
1-page illustration of Starfire by Pérez

Team Titans
#1-Terra, Sept. 1992
Inkers: Pérez (first 8 pp.) and Al Vey
#1-Nightrider, Sept. 1992
Inker: Pérez, 18 pp.
#7, Apr. 1993
Note: DC Universe page has ghosted background pin-up of DC Universe by Phil Jimenez/George Pérez (originally done for *Comics Buyer's Guide* tribute ad)

***Teen Titans* (Vol. 2)**
#1, Oct. 1996
Inker: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
1-page illustration of Atom by Dan Jurgens and Pérez
#1, Oct. 1996
Signed and numbered edition of 400 copies in black ink on silver slipcase Signed by Dan Jurgens and Pérez in black ink Edition from Dynamic Forces — with certificate of authenticity
#2, Nov. 1996
Inker: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
1-page illustration of Risk by Dan Jurgens and Pérez
#3, Dec. 1996
Inker: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
1-page illustration of Argent by Dan Jurgens and Pérez
#4, Jan. 1997
Inker: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
1-page illustration of Jato by Dan Jurgens and Pérez
#5, Feb. 1997
Inker: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
1-page illustration of Prism by Dan Jurgens and Pérez
#6, Mar. 1997
Finishes: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#7, Apr. 1997
Finishes: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#8, May 1997
Finishes: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#9, June 1997
Finishes: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#10, July 1997
Finishes: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#11, Aug. 1997
Finishes: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#12, Sept. 1997
Finishes: Pérez, plus Dick Giordano (16 pp. flashback), 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#13, Oct. 1997
Finishes: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#14, Nov. 1997
Finishes: Pérez & Lary Stucker, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez
#15, Dec. 1997
Finishes: Pérez & Lary Stucker, 22 pp.
Cover: Dan Jurgens/Pérez

Teen Titans Spotlight
#1, Aug. 1986
Cover: Pérez
#17, Dec. 1987
Cover: Jerome Moore/Pérez
#19, Feb. 1988
Cover: Pérez

The Titans
#25, Mar. 2001
Artist: Pérez, 5 pp.
Inker: Pérez

Titans Beat
#1, Aug. 1996
16 pp. preview of Teen Titans with sample artwork by Dan Jurgens and Pérez
Includes 2 pp. pin-up poster by Dan Jurgens and Pérez
Giveaway to comic stores, printed on newsprint

War of the Gods
#1, Sept. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Layouts: Pérez, 40 pp.
1-page illustration of Robin by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Wonder Woman by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Deathstroke by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Circe by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#2, Oct. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Layouts: Pérez, 40 pp.
1-page illustration of Lobo by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of The Shazam Immortals by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Ice, Power Girl, and Fire by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of The Harpies by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
Cover: Pérez (with border and fewer figures)
#2, Oct. 1991
Newsstand edition
Same as above, except cover by Pérez has no border
#3, Nov. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Layouts: Pérez, 40 pp.
1-page illustration of Batman by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Hawkman and Hawkwoman by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Shazam by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Ares and Mars by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
Cover: Pérez (with border and fewer figures)
#3, Nov. 1991
Newsstand edition
Same as above, except cover by Pérez has no border
#4, Dec. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Layouts: Pérez, 40 pp.
1-page illustration of Superman by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Black Adam by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Flash by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
1-page illustration of Troia by Chris Sprouse and Pérez
Cover: Pérez (with border and fewer figures)
#4, Dec. 1991
Newsstand edition
Same as above, except cover by Pérez has no border

Who's Who In the DC Universe
#1, Mar. 1985
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
1-page illustration of Aquaria/Aquagirl by Pérez
#2, Apr. 1985
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
1-page illustration of Blackfire by Pérez
#3, May 1985
Wraparound Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
1-page illustration of Brother Blood by Pérez
2-page illustration of Brotherhood of Evil by Pérez
#4, June 1985
Wraparound Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
1-page illustration of Changeling by Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
1-page illustration of Cheshire by Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#5, July 1985
Wraparound Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
1-page illustration of Cyborg by Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#8, Oct. 1985
1-page illustration of Fearsome Five by Pérez
#9, Nov. 1985
1/2-page illustration of Gizmo by Pérez
#10, Dec. 1985
1-page illustration of Harbinger by Pérez
1-page illustration of Hive by Pérez
1-page illustration of

Hourigan by Pérez
#11, Jan. 1986
1-page illustration of Jericho by Pérez
#12, Feb. 1986
1-page illustration of Kid Flash by Pérez
#13, Mar. 1986
Wraparound Covers: Pérez
1-page illustration of Lady Quark by Pérez
1-page illustration of Lilith by Pérez
#14, Apr. 1986
Wraparound Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
1-page illustration of Luthor 2 by Curt Swan/Pérez
1-page illustration of Luthor IV by Pérez
1-page illustration of Mammoth by Pérez
#15, May 1986
Wraparound Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
1-page illustration of Mento by Pérez
2-page illustration of the Monitors by Pérez
#16, June 1986
Wraparound Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#17, July 1986
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
1-page illustration of Nightwing 2 by Pérez
1-page illustration of Olympian Gods by Pérez/Dick Giordano
1-page illustration of Pariah by Pérez
#18, Aug. 1986
Wraparound Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
1-page illustration of Plasmus by Marv Wolfman/Pérez
#19, Sept. 1986
1-page illustration of Raven by Pérez
#22, Dec. 1986
1-page illustration of Starfire 2 by Pérez
#23, Jan. 1987
2-page illustration of the Teen Titans by Pérez
1-page illustration of Terminatorby Pérez
1-page illustration of Terra by Pérez
#24, Feb. 1987
1-page illustration of Trigon by Pérez
#25, March 1987
1-page illustration of Warp by Pérez
#26, April 1987
1-page illustration of Wonder Girl by Pérez
2-page illustration of Wonder Woman by Pérez

Who's Who in Star Trek
#1, March 1987
1-page illustration of Apollo by Pérez
#2, April 1987
1-page illustration of Gary Seven by Pérez

Who's Who in The Legion Of Super-Heroes
#1, April 1988
1-page illustration of Absorbancy Boy, An Ryd, Animal Lad, Antenna Boy, Antonio Stefanacci, and Armageddon by Curt Swan/Pérez
1-page illustration of Dawnstar by Greg Larocque/Pérez
#2, May 1988
1-page illustration of Dream Girl by Greg Larocque/Pérez
#3, June 1988
1-page illustration of the Heroes of Lallor by Jim Valentino/Pérez
#6, Oct. 1988
Covers: Jim Valentino/Pérez (front and back)

Who's Who Update '87
#1, Aug. 1987
1-page illustration of Ares by Pérez
#2, Sept. 1987
1-page illustration of Cheetah by Pérez
1-page illustration of Decay by Pérez
1-page illustration of Deimos and Phobos by Pérez
#3, Oct. 1987
1-page illustration of Hippolyte by Pérez
#4, Nov. 1987
2-page illustration of Olympian Gods by Pérez
1-page illustration of Paradise Island by Pérez

Who's Who Update '88
#2, Sept. 1988
1-page illustration of Nightwing by Pérez
#3, Oct. 1988
1-page illustration of Silver Swan by Pérez

#4, Nov. 1988
1/2-page illustration of Etta Candy by Pérez
1/2-page illustration of Julia Kapatelis by Pérez

Who's Who in the DC Universe (Vol. 2)
#2, Sept. 1990
1-page text piece on Flamebird by Barbara Kesel/Pérez
#3, Oct. 1990
1-page illustration of Silver Swan by Jill Thompson/Pérez
#4, Nov. 1990
1-page illustration of Wonder Woman by Pérez
1-page illustration of Troia by Pérez
1-page illustration of Cheetah by Kevin Maguire/Pérez
Cover: Pérez (reprint of interior page)
#5, Dec. 1990
1-page illustration of Solomon Grundy by Craig Brasfield/Pérez
#7, Feb. 1991
1-page illustration of Wonder Woman Supporting Cast by Chris Marrinan/Pérez

Wonder Woman (Vol. 1)
#283, Sept. 1981
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#284 Oct. 1981
Cover: Pérez/Dick Giordano
#300, Feb. 1983
Inside Front Cover: 1-page illustration of Wonder Woman by Pérez

Wonder Woman (Vol. 2)
#1, Feb. 1987
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 32 pp.
Inkers: Pérez (first two, caveman sequence, and last page) and Bruce Patterson
Covers: Pérez
1-page essay/introduction by Pérez
#2, Mar. 1987
Co-Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#3, Apr. 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 23 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#4, May 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#5, June 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#6, July 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#7, Aug. 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#8, Sept. 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Scripters: Pérez and Len Wein
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#9, Oct. 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: also debuted "Postscripts to Paradise" letter column art by Pérez
#10, Nov. 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Covers (Tri-fold) : Pérez
#10, Nov. 1987
Newsstand edition
Same as above, except cover by Pérez is only on front
#11, Dec. 1987
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#12, Jan. 1988
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#13, Feb. 1988
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#14, Mar. 1988
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#15, Apr. 1988
Plotter: Pérez
Scripter: Len Wein and Pérez (uncredited)
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Inkers: Pérez (title page and dream sequence) and Bruce Patterson
Cover: Pérez
#16, May 1988
Plotter: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Inker: Bob Smith
Cover: Pérez
#17, June 1988
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#18, July 1988
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#19, Aug. 1988
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#20, Sept. 88
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#21, Oct. 88
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#22, Nov. 88
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#23, 1988
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#24, 1988
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#25, 1988
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#26, Jan. 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#27, Feb. 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#28, Mar. 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#29, Apr. 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#30, May 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#31, June 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#32, July 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#33, Aug. 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#34, Sept. 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#35, Oct. 1989
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#36, Nov. 1989
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#37, Dec. 1989
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#38, Jan. 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#39, Feb. 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#40, Mar. 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#41, Apr. 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#42, May 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#43, June 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#44, July 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Chris Marrinan/Pérez
#45, Aug. 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#46, Sept. 1990
Plotter: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#47, Oct. 1990
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#48, Nov. 1990
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#49, Dec. 1990
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#50, Jan. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#51, Feb. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#52, Mar. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#53, Apr. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#54, May 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#55, June 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#56, July 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#57, Aug. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#58, Sept. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#59, Oct. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#60, Nov. 1991
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#61, Dec. 1991
Writer: Pérez
#62, Jan. 1992
Writer: Pérez

#120, Apr. 1997
Cover: Pérez
#168, May 2001
Plot: Phil Jimenez and Pérez
#169, June 2001
Story Assist: Pérez
Inker: Phil Jimenez and Pérez (4 pp.)

Wonder Woman Annual
#1, 1988 "Amazons"
Writer: Pérez
"Flight of the Icarus" 7 pp.
Inker: Pérez
"Private Lives: Testament" 5 pp.
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez/John Stracuzzi (painted)
#2, 1989 "The Game of the Name"
Writer: Pérez
Cover: Pérez/Julia Lacquement (painted)

Wonder Woman Gallery
1996
1-page illustration of Wonder Woman by Pérez

World's Finest (Vol. 1)
#271, Sept. 1981
Cover: Pérez
#276, Feb. 1982
Cover: Pérez
#277, Mar. 1982
Cover: Pérez/Tod Smith
#278, Apr. 1982
Cover: Pérez/Romeo Tanghal
#300, Feb. 1984, "Exit"
Artist: Pérez, 4 pp.
Inker: Pérez

DC COMICS BOOKS & COLLECTIONS

***Batman: A Lonely Place of Dying* Trade Paperback,** 1990
Reprints *Batman* #440-442 and *New Titans* #60-61
Cover: Pérez

Batman 3-D Graphic Novel, 1990
1-page illustration of Catwoman by Pérez

***Crisis on Infinite Earths* Regular Edition Hardcover,** 1996
Reprints issues #1-12 of *Crisis on Infinite Earths* in a hardcover limited edition, in silver slip-case
Includes 2 pages character designs by Pérez, plus some art corrections
Pages with "Monitor Tapes" feature new inks by Al Vey
Wraparound Gatefold Cover: Pérez (pencils)/Alex Ross (paints)
Insert Poster reprints cover to *Crisis* #7 by Pérez (21 x 32" folded) Shipped with rolled poster reprinting cover to *Crisis* #1

***Crisis on Infinite Earths* "Mistake" Edition Hardcover,** 1996
Same as traditional version, except pp. 280 "Monitor Tapes" repeats on page 261
This edition did not ship with rolled poster
All copies were recalled by DC Comics, but many are still in marketplace

***Crisis on Infinite Earths* Signed & Numbered Edition Hardcover,** 1998
Signed and numbered edition of 2,500 copies in black ink on silver slipcaseSigned by Marv Wolfman/Pérez/Jerry Ordway/Dick Giordano/Mike DeCarlo/Alex Ross
Edition from Dynamic Forces with certificate of authenticity

***Crisis on Infinite Earths* Trade Paperback,** 2000
Same as traditional hardcover version, with wraparound cover

***Crisis on Infinite Earths* Absolute Edition,** 2005
Reprints series with new cover and commentary from Pérez

***History of The DC Universe* Regular Edition Hardcover**
1987, DC Comics/Graphitti Designs
Reprints both Vol s of *History of The DC Universe* in a hardcover limited edition, co-published by DC and Graphitti Designs
Regular edition features one-page illustration of Wonder Woman by Pérez and Trina Robbins
Reg. ed. also features one-page text piece by Pérez
Reg. ed features three-page multi-artist gatefold poster with Wonder Woman by Pérez.
Reg. ed. features postcard for *History of the DC Universe* poster
Reg. ed. features *History of the DC Universe* cloisonne pin

***History Of The DC Universe* Signed & Numbered Edition Hardcover**
1987, DC Comics/Graphitti Designs
Signed and numbered edition of 1,000 copies by Marv Wolfman and Pérez
S & N ed. features a one-page illustration of Batman, Wonder Woman, and Superman by Pérez
S & N ed. features all contents of Reg. ed.

***History of The DC Universe* Trade Paperback**
2002, DC Comics
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Pencils: George Pérez
Inks: Karl Kesel

***Infinite Crisis* Hardcover**
2006, DC Comics
Reprints *Infinite Crisis* #1-7
Cover: Pérez

***JLA: The Greatest Stories Ever Told* Trade Paperback**
2006, DC Comics
Reprints classic and new JLA stories

***JLA/Avengers* Collectors Edition Hardcover**
2004, DC Comics
Reprints *JLA/Avengers* #1-4 with an entire second volume of extra material

***The New Teen Titans* Archives Hardcover**
#1, 1999
Reprints *DC Comics Presents* #26 and *The New Teen Titans* #1-8
Also includes pin-ups from various Titans issues and multiple pieces of Titans art from DC Style Guide by Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#2, 2004
Reprints New Teen Titans #9-16, and Best of DC #18
Cover: Pérez
#3, 2006
Reprints New Teen Titans #17-20, and Tales of the New Teen Titans #1-4
Cover: Pérez

***The New Teen Titans: The Judas Contract* Trade Paperback**
1988
Reprints *The New Teen Titans* #39-40, *Tales of the New Teen Titans* #41-44 and Annual #3
Two-page text piece by Pérez
Cover: Pérez
2003
Reprints *The New Teen Titans* #39-40, *Tales of the New Teen Titans* #41-44 and Annual #3

***The New Teen Titans: The Terror of Trigon* Trade Paperback** 2003
Reprints New Titans Vol 2 #1-5

***The New Teen Titans: Terra Incognita* Trade Paperback**
2006
Reprints New Teen Titans #28-34 *and New Teen Titans Annual* #2

***Sachs & Violens* Trade Paperback,** 1996
Reprints entire series
Cover: Pérez

***Superman in the Eighties* Trade Paperback,** 2006
Reprints include *Action Comics* #507-508, 554, 595, 600 (select stories) 644, *Superman* #408, *DC Comics Presents* #29, and *Adventures of Superman* #430

***Superman: Eradication!* Trade Paperback,** 1998
Reprints include *Superman* #28-30, 32-33, *Adventures of Superman* #451-456, *Action Comics Annual* #2 and *Action Comics* #643

***Superman: Exile* Trade Paperback,** 1995
Reprints include *Action Comics* #643 and Action Comics Annual #2

***Superman: The Wedding & Beyond* Trade Paperback,** 1997
Reprints *Superman: The Wedding Album*

***Superman: Whatever Happened To The Man Of Tomorrow* Trade Paperback,** Dec. 1996
Reprints *Superman* #423 and *Action Comics* #583
4-page article on the making of the original stories with quotes by Pérez

***Titans/Outsiders: The Death & Return of Donna Troy* Trade Paperback,** 2006
Reprints include *Titans/Young Justice: Graduation Day* #1-3 and *DC Special: The Return of Donna Troy*#1-4
Cover: Jimenez/Pérez

***Wonder Woman: Destiny Calling* Trade Paperback,** 2006
Reprints Wonder Woman (Vol 2) #20-24 and Annual #1
Cover: Pérez

***Wonder Woman: Beauty and the Beasts* Trade Paperback,** 2006
Reprints Wonder Woman (vol. 2)#15-17 and *Action Comics #600*
Cover: Pérez

***Wonder Woman: Challenge of the Gods* Trade Paperback,** 2005
Reprints Wonder Woman (vol. 2)#7-14
Cover: Pérez

***Wonder Woman: Gods and Mortals* Trade Paperback,** 2004
Reprints Wonder Woman (Vol 2) #1-7
Covers: Pérez

***Wonder Woman: Paradise Lost* Trade Paperback,** 1995
Reprints Wonder Woman #164-170

2-D GRAPHICS

Captain Awareness: Assault On Campus
#1, May 1995
Inker: Pérez (four pages), Pérez and Jeff Whiting (one page)
#1, Fall 2001
Same as above but signed and limited edition, with certificate of authenticity

AA2 ENTERTAINMENT

Agony Acres
#2, 1996
Cover: Ronn Stern/Pérez
#3, 1997
Cover: Ronn Stern/Pérez
#4, 1997
Cover: Ronn Stern/Pérez
#5, 1998
Cover: Ronn Stern/Pérez

CROSSGENERATION COMICS

CrossGen Chronicles
#2, Feb. 2001
Artist: Pérez, 32 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Dennis Jensen
1 pp. preview of Crossgen Chronicles #3 cover by Pérez and Bob Wiacek
1/2 pp. biography and photo of Pérez
Note: A second printing was issued a few weeks after the first printing, but the only difference is the indicia lists it as a "second printing"
#3, June 2001
Artist: Pérez, 36 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Bob Wiacek
1 pp. preview of Crossgen Chronicles #4 cover by Pérez and Mike Perkins
Note: issue features Minister Geres, a character (introduced in the regular Meridian series) based on Pérez.
#4, Sept. 2001
Artist: Pérez, 34 pp.
Cover: Pérez/Mike Perkins
#5, Dec. 2001
Artist: Pérez, 32 pp.
Cover: Pérez

CrossGen Illustrated
#1, Nov. 2001
Reprints 3 Pérez pages of CrossGen Chronicles #3

***Meridian* Trade Paperback**
#2, 2002
Reprints Crossgen Chronicles #3 by Pérez

***Mystic* Trade Paperback**
#2, 2002
Reprints Crossgen Chronicles #5 by Pérez

***Scion* Trade Paperback**
#2, 2002
Reprints Crossgen Chronicles #2 by Pérez

***Sigil* Trade Paperback**
#2, 2002
Reprints Crossgen Chronicles #4 by Pérez

Sojourn Prequel
#1, July 2001
Features an advertisement with a photo of Pérez and a two-line quote.
Ad was also used in *The First* #8, *Mystic* #13, *Sigil* #13, *Crux* #3, *Scion* #3 and *Meridian* #13, all shipping in June 2001

Solus
#1, Mar. 2003
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#2, Apr. 2003
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#3, May 2003
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#4, June 2003
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#6, Sept. 2003
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
#7, Oct. 2003
Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez

CRUSADE ENTERTAINMENT

Shi: Senryaku Signed Collection
July 2001
Artist: Pérez, 2 pp.

DELUXE COMICS

Wally Wood's T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents
#1, Feb. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 10p pp.
Inkers: Pérez (pages #1 and 3) and Dave Cockrum
Cover: Pérez
Note: Belly-dancer Phoenicia is based on Pérez's second wife, Carol Flynn.
#2, Mar. 1985
Artist: Pérez, 10 pp.
Inker: Pérez/Bill Wray
Covers: Pérez (back cover features unretouched cover to issue #3) 2-page center fold of Iron Maiden 1-page illustration of Menthor
#3, Nov. 1985
Cover: Pérez (face of "Weed" retouched by John Workman)
#4, Feb. 1986
Artist: Pérez, 10 pp.
Cover: Pérez (Iron Maiden's face redrawn by John Workman)

DYNAMITE ENTERTAINMENT

Darkman vs. the Army of Darkness
#1, Oct. 2006
Regular cover, B/W cover, Negative Art cover: Pérez
#2, Nov. 2006
Regular cover, B/W cover, Negative Art cover: Pérez

Red Sonja
#12, July 2006
Cover: Pérez

EVENT COMICS

Crimson Plague Ashcan
1996
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez
Inker: Pérez
Covers: Pérez
Ashcan includes several pages of *Crimson Plague* art work, and several pages of Gladiator artwork.
The Crimson Plague art did not feature real people in the cast, thus the faces and names are different in this version from later versions.
Limited to 100 copies, with color covers and a color insert. Book is 24 pp. Plus covers.
Note: This ashcan was actually put together by Pérez and Shelton Drumm of Heroes Aren't Hard to Find, prior to the deal with Event Comics, but is listed here for consistency.

Crimson Plague
#1, June 1997, "Dead Moon Party"
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez
Inker: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
Inside cover illustration of DNA: by Pérez
#1, June 1997
Alternate photo cover — Signed edition from Wizard/ American Entertainment Signed in gold ink by Pérez With certificate of authenticity
#1, June 1997
Alternate wraparound cover by Pérez for Heroes 1997 convention

EVOLUTION COMICS

Dangerous Times
#4, 1991
Cover: Pérez

GAY COMICS

Gay Comics
#20, Late Summer 1993
Cover: J.A. Fluda/Pérez
Note: Mistakenly listed as "Super Gay Comics" in some comic guides

GENESIS WEST

Last Of The Viking Heroes
#2, June 1987
Cover: Mike Thibodeaux/Pérez

GORILLA COMICS/IMAGE COMICS

Crimson Plague
#1, June 2000, "Dead Moon Party"
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez
Inker: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
48 pp. (Reprints Crimson Plague #1 with 16 new pages and new cover)
Inside cover illustration of DNA: by Pérez
Two 1-page illustrations of DNA: by Pérez
1-page text piece about history of Crimson Plague by Pérez
1/4-page text piece about Gorilla Comics by Pérez
#1, June 2000
"Westfield Edition" same as above, except also included 8.5 x 11" art print of DNA: signed by Pérez and DNA. Image is DNA: in red standing above skeletal remains, with grey facial close-up on the right.
Comic cover is also signed by Pérez. Sold by Westfield Comics.
#2, August 2000, "Sole Survivor"
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez
Inker: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
Inside cover illustration of DNA: by Pérez
2-page letter column with text answers by Pérez

Empire
#1, May 2000
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez
Inker: Pérez
6 pp.
1-page text piece about Heroes Con by Pérez
1-page ad illustration of DNA: by Pérez

ShockRockets
#2, May 2000
1-page inside back cover advertisement for Heroes Con by Pérez

IMAGE COMICS

***Brigade* (Vol. 1)**
#3, Sept. 1993
Cover: Marat Mychaels/ Pérez

Shadowhawk 2
#2, July 1993
1-page illustration of Shadowhawk by Pérez

City of Heroes
#1, 2005
Cover: Pérez
#1, 2005
Foil Edition
Cover: Pérez

Common Grounds
#4, Apr. 2004
Artist: Pérez, 6 pp.

Freshman
#1, 2004
Cover: Pérez

Spawn
#1, May 1992
1-page illustration of Spawn by Pérez
#101, Dec. 2000
Cover: Pérez

***Spawn* (Mexico, Grupo Editorial)**
#0, July 5, 1997
Back Cover: Pérez (reprints pin-up from U.S. issue #1)
Note: This commemorative comic book was only released at a comic convention in Mexico City. Text is in Spanish, with a probable print-run of 5,000 copies.

Witchblade
#92, Nov. 2006
10th Anniversary issue.
Art by: Mike Choi, Chris Bachalo, Marc Silvestri, Pérez, Luke Ross, Francis Manapul, Rodolfo Migliari, Brandon Peterson, Bart Sears, Terry Dodson, Joseph Michael Linsner, Eric Basaldua, Keu Cha

Youngblood Battlezone
#2, July 1994
2-page illustration of Youngblood by Pérez
2-page illustration of Team Youngblood by Pérez

MALIBU COMICS

***The All New Exiles* (Vol. 2)**
#1, Oct. 1995
Includes complete corrected reprint of *UltraForce* #1 (Vol. 2)
#2, Nov. 1995
Note: Flip covers include first cover box illustration of Juggernaut by Pérez.

Break-Thru
#1, Dec. 1993
Artist: Pérez, 35 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#1, Dec. 1993
Same as above but with silver foil on cover and stamped "Ultra 5000 Limited"Edition size limited to 5,000 copies
#2, Jan. 1994
Artist: Pérez, 37 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#2, Jan. 1994
Same as above but with silver foil on cover and stamped Ultra 5000 Limited"Edition size limited to 5,000 copies

Codename: Firearm
#0, June 1995
Cover: Pérez

Genesis
#0, Oct. 1993
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
Note: Wraparound cover is on chromium paper

Godwheel
#3, Feb. 1995
Artist: Pérez, 6 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#3, Feb. 1995
Same interiors as above but cover features Mantra by John Statema, and inset of Thor by Pérez

Giant Size Mantra
#1, July 1994
Cover: Pérez
2-page illustration of Mantra vs. Topaz
Note: Cover is taken from pin-up inside. Indicia lists "Vol. 1, #1," while cover lists "#1."

Hardcase
#8, Jan. 1994
Artist: Pérez, 2 pp.
#20, Feb. 1995
Cover: Greg Luzniak/Pérez

Malibu Ashcan: UltraForce
June 1994
3-page interview with Pérez, plus quotes throughout issue
4 pages design illustrations for Afalon, Ghoul, Pax, and Topaz
Note: Half-size 16 pp. "Ashcan" comic is limited to 25,000 copies

***Mantra* (Vol. 2)**
#2, Nov. 1995
Note: Flip covers include first cover box illustration of Mantra by Pérez.

***The Night Man* (Vol. 2)**
#2, Nov. 1995
Note: Flip covers include first cover box illustration of Night Man by Pérez.

***Prime* (Vol. 1)**
#15, Oct. 1994
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#16, Nov. 1994
Cover: Pérez/Jerry Ordway
Features premiere of Turbo Charge created by Len Strazewski and Pérez

***Prime* (Vol. 2)**
#2, Nov. 1995
Note: Flip covers include first cover box illustration of Prime by Pérez.

***Rune* (Vol. 2)**
#2, Nov. 1995
Note: Flip covers include first cover box illustration of Rune by Pérez.

Rune/Silver Surfer
#1, Apr. 1995
Back (flip) Cover: John Busaema/Pérez

Siren
#2, Nov. 1995
Note: Flip covers include first cover box illustration of Siren by Pérez.

***UltraForce* (Vol. 1)**
#OA, June 1994
Artist: Pérez, 12 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: Included as half-size "Ashcan" comic inside Wizard #35
#OB, July 1994, "UltraForce"
Artist: Pérez, 12 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: Included as half-size "Ashcan" comic inside Wizard #35

#0, Sept. 1994
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
2 pp. covers reprinted to Wizard Ashcans by Pérez
Note: Contents are full-sized reprints of Wizard Ashcans
#1, Aug. 1994
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: Includes bound-in Skybox Master Series Ultraverse trading card #UF1
#1, Aug. 1994
Cover: Pérez
Note: Same contents as above, except Gold Hologram cover limited edition
#2, Oct. 1994
Breakdowns: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: Cover features Prime walking away from UltaForce team
#2, Oct. 1994
Cover: Pérez
Note: Same as above, except cover features close-up of Prime
Small logo on lower left says "Limited Special Edition"
#3, Nov. 1994
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#4, Jan. 1995
Artist: Pérez, 25 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#5, Feb. 1995
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#6, March '95
Artist: Pérez & Steven Butler, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
Note: Pérez did full pencils on pages #1-15, and layouts on pages #16-24
#7, Apr. 1995
Cover: Pérez
#8, May 1995
Artist: Pérez, 24 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#9, June 1995
Cover: Pérez
#10, July 1995
Cover: Pérez
Also features text page with Pérez sketches of Codename Firearm designs

***UltraForce* (Vol. 2)**
#1, Oct. 1995
Cover: Steven Butler/Pérez
#1, Oct. 1995
Cover: Steven Butler/Pérez
Same as above, except cover is painted by Chuck Maiden over line art
Limited Edition — one copy for every five of regular editions.
#2, Nov. 1995
Cover: Steven Butler/Pérez
Includes complete corrected reprint of *UltraForce* #1 (Vol. 2) The Phoenix Ressurection #2"
Flip Cover: Carlos Pacheco/Pérez
Note: Flip covers include first cover box illustration of Topaz by Pérez.
#3, Dec. 1995
Cover: Steven Butler/Pérez
Note: Cover also includes first cover box illustration of Ghoul by Pérez.
#4, Jan. 1996
Cover: John Statema/Pérez (pencils miscredited to Steven Butler)
Note: Cover also includes first cover box illustration of Black Knight by Pérez.
#5, Feb. 1996
Cover: Darick Robertson/Pérez
Note: Cover also includes first cover box illustration of Shunkeen by Pérez.
#6, Mar. 1996
Cover: Darick Robertson/Pérez
Note: Cover also includes first cover box illustration of Prototype by Pérez.
#7, Apr. 1996
Cover: Darick Robertson/Pérez

UltraForce/Avengers Prelude
#1, July 1995
Cover: Pérez

UltraForce/Avengers
#1, Fall 1995
Artist: Pérez, 48 pp.
Inker: Pérez (faces on DNA and Shannon only).
Wraparound Cover: Pérez
Note: Cover has silver foil and joins with cover of *Avengers/UltraForce* #1 to create single image by Pérez
This issue is continued from *Avengers/UltraForce* #1, published by Marvel
This issue contains a two-page spread with many creator-owned characters from other comic companies, including the debut of Pérez's Gladiator, sidekick Tribune (miscolored), Shannon Lower and Crimson Plague. Also features Peter David/Pérez's Sachs & Violens.

UltraForce: Infinity
Sept. 1995
Frontspiece: Pérez

UltraForce/Spider-Man
#1-A, Jan. 1996
Cover: Phil Jimenez/Pérez
#1-B, Jan. 1996
Cover: Pérez/Phil Jimenez

Ultraverse Origins
#1, Jan. 1994
Reprints 2 pp. "Solitaire" story from *Hardcase* #8
Note: Cover features Prime by Norm Breyfogle
#1, Jan. 1994
Same as above but with silver foil on cover and stamped "Ultra 5000 Limited"Edition size limited to 5,000 copies
#1, Jan. 1994
Same contents as above but with different cover
Fold-out cover features Ultraverse Heroes by Joe Quesada and Joe Rubinstein
#1, Jan. 1994
Same as above but with silver foil on cover and stamped "Ultra 5000 Limited"Edition size limited to 5,000 copies

Ultraverse Year Two
#1, Aug. 1995
Reprints 1-page with UltraForce art by Pérez

MALIBU BOOKS & COLLECTIONS

***Wheel of the Gods: Godwheel Collection* Trade Paperback**, 1995
Reprints *Godwheel* #0-4
Cover: Pérez (reprints cover to *Godwheel* #3)

TEKNO COMICS

I-Bots
#1, Early Dec. 1995
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#2, Late Dec. 1995
Artist: Pérez, 22 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#2, Late Dec. 1995
Same interiors as above but cover is by Howard Chaykin
#3, Jan. 1996
Layouts: Pérez, 20 pp.
Finished Pencils: Pérez and Jose Delbo
Cover: Pérez
#4, Feb. 1996
Art: Pérez, 7 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#5, Mar. 1996
Layouts: Pérez
Finished Pencils: Pérez and Brian Kong, 20 pp.
Cover: Pérez
#6, April '96
Layouts: Pérez, 20 pp.
Cover: Pérez

Tekno Comics Handbook
#1, May '96
5 pages character designs of I-Bots by Pérez

TONY LORENZ PRODUCTIONS

Geogre Pérez Newsletter
#1, Mar. 2001
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#2, Dec. 2001
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#3, July. 2002
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez

Pacesetter, The George Pérez Magazine
#1, Mar. 2003
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#2, Aug. 2003
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#3, Jan. 2004
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#4, 2004
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#5, Jan. 2005
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#6, 2005
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#7, 2005
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez
#8, Sept. 2006
Interview with Pérez
Art and cover: Pérez

TOPPS COMICS

Jack Kirby's Secret City Saga
#4, Aug. 1993
Cover: Steve Ditko/Pérez
This edition is polybagged with two exclusive trading cards included

Jurassic Park
#1, June 1993
Inker: Pérez, 29 pp.
Cover: Gil Kane/Pérez
Note: Includes entry form to win signed Amberchrome edition of issue #1
This direct sales edition is poly-bagged with three exclusive trading cards included
#1, June 1993
Newsstand edition, not poly bagged with cards
Same contents as above, except cover is by Dave Cockrum
#1, June 1993
Amberchrome edition
Same contents as Direct Sales edition, with cover by Gil Kane/Pérez
Edition limited to 500 numbered copies signed by entire creative team
#1, June 1993
Amberchrome edition
Same contents as signed edition, with cover by Gil Kane/Pérez
Unsigned edition limited to 7500 numbered copies
#2, Early July 1993
Inker: Pérez, 28 pp.
Cover: Gil Kane/Pérez
Note: Includes entry form to win signed Amberchrome edition of issue #1
This direct sales edition is poly-bagged with three exclusive trading cards included
#2, Early July 1993
Newsstand edition, not polybagged with cards
Same contents as above, except cover is by Dave Cockrum, and there is no coupon
#3, Late July 1993
Inker: Pérez, 28 pp.
Cover: Gil Kane/Pérez
Note: Includes entry form to win signed Amberchrome edition of issue #1
This direct sales edition is poly-bagged with three exclusive trading cards included
#3, Late July 1993
Newsstand edition, not polybagged with cards
Same contents as above, except cover is by Dave Cockrum, and there is no coupon

#4, Aug. 1993
Inker: Pérez, 29 pp.
Cover: Gil Kane/Pérez
This direct sales edition is poly-bagged with three exclusive trading cards included
#4, Aug. 1993
Newsstand edition, not poly bagged with cards
Same contents as above, except cover is by Dave Cockrum

Return To Jurassic Park
#9, Feb. 1996
Artist: Pérez, 1 pp. of story

***Zorro* (Vol. 3)**
#8, Aug. 1994
Cover: Pérez

TOPPS BOOKS & COLLECTIONS

***Jurassic Park* Trade Paperback, 1993**
Reprints *Jurassic Park* #1-4
Note: TPB is polybagged with an exclusive *Jurassic Park* #0 included inside

TSR

Intruder (Intruder Comics Module)
#4, 1990 (ICR #4)
Cover design by Pérez (uncredited), painted by Ted Boonthanakit

Intruder 2 (Intruder Comics Module)
#1, 1990 (ICR #5)
Cover: Pérez
#2, 1990 (ICR #6)
Cover: Pérez
#3, 1991 (ICR #7)
Cover: Pérez

R.I.P. (R.I.P. Comics Module)
#5, 1990 (cover says "Brasher")
Cover design by Pérez (credited), painted by Ted Boonthanakit
#6, 1990 (cover says "Brasher")
Cover design by Pérez (uncredited), painted by Ted Boonthanakit

TWOMORROWS PUBLISHING

Best of the Legion Outpost
Nov. 2004
Features pinups by Pérez

Jack Kirby Collector
#31, Apr. 2001
Features a tiny drawing of Brian Boerner byPérez

Modern Masters #2: George Pérez
2003
Features reprints and rare art by Pérez
Cover: Pérez

T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents Companion
Sept. 2005
Features interview with and art by Pérez

Titans Companion
Dec. 2006
Interior art and cover: Pérez

WIZARD

Wizard: The Comics Magazine
#125, Dec. 2001
Cover: Pérez
#143, 2003
Preview of JLA/Avengers
#144, 2003
Preview of JLA/Avengers
Cover: Pérez
#169, Sept. 2005
Reprinted page of Infinite Crisis #1

Wizard CrossGen Special
#1, Aug. 2001
Cover: Pérez

Wizard Postermania
2001
Reprinted Pérez poster image
2002
Reprinted Pérez poster image
2003
Reprinted Pérez poster image
2004
Reprinted Pérez poster image

UNPUBLISHED PROJECTS

Avengers Assemble (Marvel)
Four-issue mini-series plotted by Pérez

Dark Horse Presents #50
(Dark Horse Comics) —
"Settlement"
Writer/ Artist: Pérez
1-page (was planned to be incorporated into a future Crimson Plague)

George Pérez's Women of Double Trouble Portfolio
Double Trouble Productions
Planned portfolio would include plates featuring characters from videos and website of Double Trouble (see Television Work & Videos for more information). Characters from the "The Sisterhood of SuperHeroines" with Pérez artwork are: Amazon Queen, Blond Vixen, Brittania, Corpus Christine, Daisy Chain, Darkraven, Dragonfly, Femme Fatale, Mistress Evil, Princess Patriot, Spite, Sprite, Super Maiden, US Angel.

New Teen Titan "Games" Graphic Novel (DC)
Artist: Pérez
Inkers: Pérez, Al Vey (30 pages), Karl Kesel (partial 1 page) 65 pp. (finished) 6 pp. (lay outs)
Note: Pages were displayed at Heroes Convention 1995.

Pacific Presents (Pacific)
Cover: Pérez (for story called "The Mime")

UltraVerse (Malibu)
Unpublished The Solution illustration
Penciled by John Statema, inked by Pérez
Unpublished Prime illustration penciled by John Statema and inked by Pérez

Wolverine Trading Card (Marvel)
Wolverine in Danger Room

SOLICITED, BUT NEVER APPEARED

Dreamsmith Studio's BOOK
#3, 1998
Cover: Pérez (Chimera)

Foodang (Vol. 2, August House)
#4, Mar. 1995
Cover: Michael Duggan/ Pérez

Hero Graphics Spotlight (Hero Comics)
#2, 1992 (solicited March 1992)
Article on Pérez's work for Hero
#3, 1992 (solicited April 1992)
Flare artwork by Pérez

Intruders (Brave New Worlds)
#1, 1992
(solicited Dec. 1991 and July 1992)
Cover: Pérez
(characters include Shriken, Steelgrave, Target, and Rhesus)

Iron Maiden Poster (Deluxe)
1985

Menthor Poster (Deluxe)
1985

The T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents and Foes Role-Playing Game (Deluxe)
1985, Fantasy Games Unlimited/Deluxe
Writer: Jack Herman
With some interior art by Pérez
Cover: Pérez

Section Zero
#6, 2001, Gorilla Comics
Writers: Kurt Busiek
Artist: Pérez
Note: "Westwind" story was planned as a 5- page intro, only one page ever drawn

Crimson Plague
#3, 2000, Gorilla Comics, "Sole Survivor"
Writer/Artist: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
Note: Only 15 pp. and the cover were drawn for this issue

#4, 2000, Gorilla Comics, "And the Earth Ran Red"
Writer: Pérez
Artist: Pérez
Inker: Pérez
Cover: Pérez
Note: Only the cover was drawn for this issue

websites

The Artist's Choice — http://www.theartistschoice.com/
Original art dealer for Pérez, pages available listed on the site

D.C. Comics.com — http://www.dccomics.com

Double Trouble Productions — http:// www.dtwrestling.com
Features super-heroine illustrations plus super-heroine videos written and directed by Pérez
(see Television Work & Videos for more information)

Dynamte Entertainment — http:// www.dynamiteentertainment.com
Features covers by Pérez

George-Pérez Com — http://www.george-perez.com
Has links and gallery of art by Pérez

Marvel Comics.com — http://www.marvel.com

SuperHeroine's Demise — http://www.sooperhero.com
Features a dozen pieces of super-heroine fight/fetish/bondage art and commentary by Pérez

The Titan's Tower — http://www.titanstower.com
Extensive site with many interview transcripts and sketches by Pérez

bibliography

For more information on the career of George Pérez, see any of the following:

- Vu Nguyen's website, http://www.george-perez.com, the place to turn for Pérez-related news and information.
- *Pacesetter, The George Pérez Magazine*. Published several times a year by Tony Lorenz.
- *The Pérez Archives*. Compiled and written by Andy Mangels, published by AM Productions, 2001.
- *Focus On: George Pérez*. Published by Fantagraphics Books, 1985.
- *David Anthony Kraft's Comics Interview*. The 50th issue of Kraft's magazine, published in 1987, was a special edition devoted to the works of Pérez.

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